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BY SEA & SHORE

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Secret treasures awaiting the intrepid on the world's hidden highways

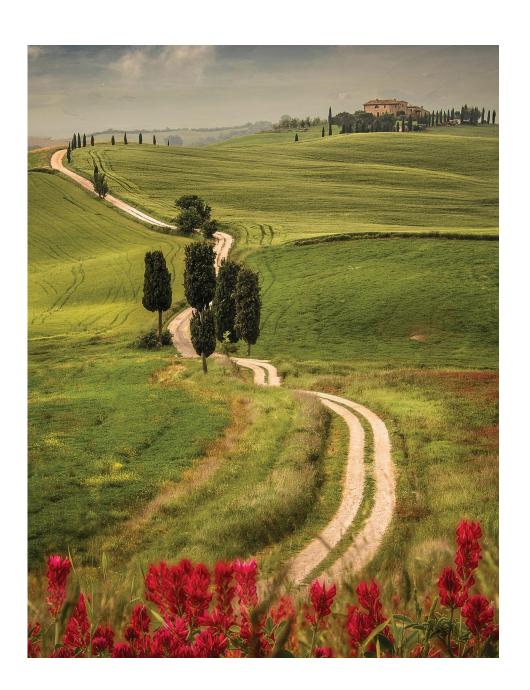


URBAN EXCURSIONS 208

Big, busy, bright, and brilliant city drives







INTRODUCTION

foot and light-hearted I take to the open road. Healthy, free, the world before me," wrote Walt Whitman in Leaves of Grass. It was 1855—a full 30 years before the advent of the automobile. It's as if the great American poet was gazing into the future—one where road trips are a global obsession.

Drives of a Lifetime reflects that exact reality and Whitman's sentiment: an urge to pack a bag, climb behind the wheel, fill the tank, browse a map, and put pedal to the metal in pursuit of adventures that have lingered in our dreams, along highways both comfortably familiar and refreshingly new.

Road-trippers well know that the final destination isn't nearly as important as the journey itself. You ultimately end up somewhere. But it's the drive that creates the sense of freedom, the aura of disconnection from everyday life, and the anticipation of what lies ahead, especially along roads less traveled.

Horatio Nelson Jackson is credited with inventing the road trip in 1903 when he overheard a group of men disparaging the automobile as a passing fad at a gentlemen's club in San Francisco. He bet them \$50 he could drive a car from coast to coast. Sixty-three days later, Jackson arrived in New York City—after plenty of trials, tribulations, and adventures along the way. For the rest of his life, it was the drive that Jackson reminisced about, not the destination.

His seemingly impossible feat set the stage for other drivers. In

His seemingly impossible feat set the stage for other drivers. In 1912, Carl Clancy became the first person to circumnavigate the globe on a motorcycle. That same year, Jack Haney and Thomas Wilby became the first motorists to drive Canada from coast to coast. Stella Court Treatt proved that women could also be road warriors when she helped pilot the first drive across Africa from 1924 to 1926, a journey from Cape Town to Cairo that took a staggering 16 months.

No matter how long the route or difficult the conditions, people were hooked. Today, more than 48 million Americans and millions more worldwide choose to hit the road when it comes time for a vacation. The collection you hold in your hands celebrates that passion with 500 spectacular drives across the globe, fully updated and revised, and featuring all—her word trips in this second edition.

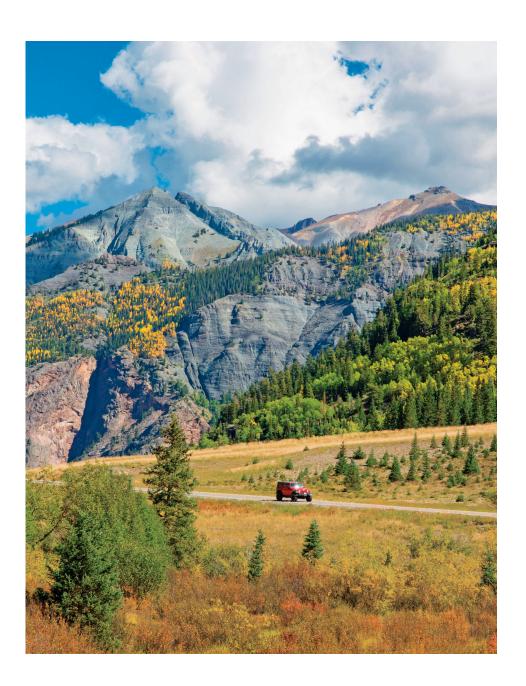
From California's Big Sur and Australia's Great Ocean Road to South Africa's Garden Route and the Silk Road, many of the planet's legendary routes are covered. Then there are those off the beaten path: Jordan's historic King's Highway, the incredibly scenic Irohazaka Winding Road in Japan, and a journey through Sri Lanka's lush central highlands.

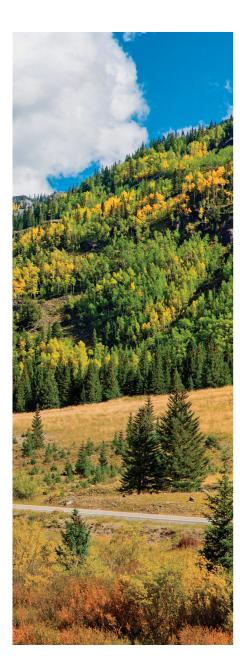
Browse our routes, pack your bags, and hit the highway in the spirit of celebrated road-tripper Jack Kerouac, who wrote: "There was nowhere to go but everywhere, keep rolling under the stars..."

 ${\it Joe\ Yogerst}$ Award-winning travel writer and photographer

 $\label{lem:opposite} \mbox{OPPOSITE: Cypress trees line a winding road in the rolling Tuscan countryside near Siena, Italy.}$

INTRODUCTION | 7





CHAPTER 1 HILLS & MOUNTAINS

his is what driving was meant to be: vertiginous, soul-stirring journeys where every turn brings fresh rewards—constantly changing vistas, different permutations of light, rolling meadows, eerie rock formations, waterfalls spilling down rock faces, tantalizing forest tracks, and remote settlements where life moves to its own rhythm. Some journeys wend their way along peaceful byways. Others are for those who like to test their mettle behind the wheel, featuring hairpin bends, hidden dips, earpopping gradients, and a chance to look down from a great height on birds of prey swooping far below. The Blue Ridge Parkway evokes the spirit of early settlers setting out to fulfill their American dreams, whereas $Colorado's \, San \, Juan \, Skyway \, offers \, another \, vision \, of \, the \,$ past, climbing into a lost world of prehistoric Puebloan settlements and 19th-century mining towns. An ascent into Costa Rica's cloud forest provides the possibility of a close encounter with that dandy of the tropics, the $rainbow\mbox{-}feathered\mbox{ }quetzal\mbox{ }bird.\mbox{ }Across\mbox{ }the\mbox{ }Pacific,\mbox{ }the\mbox{ }$ emerald-hued rice terraces of the Philippines, cut by hand into slopes, rise thousands of feet into the sky.

The San Juan Skyway passes below forest and mountains near the 19th-century gold- and silver-boom settlement of Ouray, Colorado.

HILLS & MOUNTAINS | 9



Skyline Drive winds through elegant and tranquil Shenandoah National Park

VIRGINIA I

SPECTACULAR SKYLINE DRIVE

Motorists treasure this route, which teeters along the spine of northern Virginia's Blue Ridge in Shenandoah National Park, providing wondrous views of the Shenandoah Valley to the west and rolling foothills to the east.

eading south from Front Royal on U.S. 340, your first view of the valley that Native Americans purportedly called "Daughter of the Stars" is from Shenandoah Valley Overlook, with its sweeping panorama of the meandering Shenandoah River and Massanutten Mountain. The overlook comes at Mile 2.8 of Skyline Drive, which begins at Shenandoah National Park's northern entrance. Continue along forested Dickey Ridge; 6 miles (10 km) past Dickey Ridge Visitor Center, the $road\,runs\,through\,Compton\,Gap\,and\,follows\,the\,mountain\,crest.\,You\,can\,view\,the\,river's\,looping\,course$ at Hogback Overlook before taking the snaking road down to Thornton Gap and through Mary's Rock Tunnel, where Tunnel Parking Overlook peers into a hollow that was inhabited by 20 families when the park was established in the 1930s. Just beyond, Hazel Mountain Overlook has views of the park's $third\ highest\ peak\ (3,815\ feet/1,163\ m);\ hikes\ along\ the\ streams\ and\ forest\ paths\ of\ Hazel\ Country\ begin$ half a mile (800 m) ahead. Keep a lookout for white-tailed deer, skunks, and barred owls as you wind south around The Pinnacle and Stony Man Peak. You have a good view of Old Rag granite on the mountain's upper peaks at Old Rag View Overlook. Two hikes begin within the next 2 miles (3.2 km). The $first \, runs \, from \, Upper \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, the \, 4,050-foot \, (1,234 \, m) \, Hawksbill \, Parking \, to \, the \, park's \, highest \, peak, \, t$ bill Mountain; the second, a steep trail, descends to the cascades of Dark Hollow Falls. Big Meadows is a remnant of the ancient plains that once covered the region. Hazeltop Ridge Overlook has views of the Blue Ridge's smoky peaks, and at Bearfence Mountain Parking you can scramble up a trail to one of the few 360-degree vistas in the park. The drive winds on to Swift Run Gap and crosses a trail to one of the few 360-degree vistas in the park. The drive winds on to Swift Run Gap and crosses a trail to one of the few 360-degree vistas in the park. The drive winds on to Swift Run Gap and crosses a trail to one of the few 360-degree vistas in the park. The drive winds on to Swift Run Gap and crosses a trail to one of the few 360-degree vistas in the park. The drive winds on to Swift Run Gap and crosses a trail to one of the few 360-degree vistas in the park. The drive winds on to Swift Run Gap and crosses a trail to one of the few 360-degree vistas in the park. The drive winds on the Swift Run Gap and crosses a trail to one of the few 360-degree vistas and t the park's southern boundary to end at Rockfish Gap, where a bison path once ran.

FROM: Front Royal, Virginia
TO: Rockfish Gap, Virginia
ROAD: U.S. 340, Skyline Drive
DISTANCE: 105 miles (169 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring and fall
PLANNING:
visitshenandoah.com



10 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

SOUTH CAROLINA

CHEROKEE FOOTHILLS

The Cherokee Foothills Scenic Byway in northern South Carolina runs southwest from Gaffney through the Blue Ridge foothills, past peach orchards, clear lakes, streams filled with darting fish, and country meadows.

irst stop is Cowpens National Battlefield—9.5 miles (15 km) west of Gaffney along S.C. 11—where a quiet meadow marks the site of a strategic victory for the colonists during the Revolutionary War. From here, the road begins to rise and fall as the mountains ahead grow ever closer. About 9 miles (14 km) beyond the pretty town of Campobello, the road passes Hogback and Glassy Mountains and enters the beautiful Blue Ridge foothills. Crossing the North and Middle Saluda Rivers, the road passes through Cleveland and continues along the South Saluda River, popular with trout anglers. About 12 miles (19 km) along, you'll spot a 1,200-foot (365 m) precipice, known as Caesar's Head, protruding from the mountainside. $You can \ reach \ it \ by \ taking \ a \ 7.5-mile \ (12 \ km) \ detour \ up \ dizzying \ U.S. \ 276, \ which \ offers \ fantastic \ views$ of the Blue Ridge and surrounding states. Back on S.C. 11, drive about 7 miles (11 km) to the quirky village of Aunt Sue's Country Corner, full of craft and food shops. Table Rock State Park, 2 miles (3 km) $beyond\ the\ village, was\ revered\ by\ the\ Cherokee\ Nation\ as\ the\ favored\ dining\ spot\ for\ the\ Great\ Spirit.$ $The park's \ east \ gate \ leads \ to \ historic \ Table \ Rock \ Lodge, famous \ for \ its \ fantastic \ views; \ the \ west \ gate$ leads to Pinnacle Lake, with trails up the slopes of Pinnacle and Table Rock Mountains. Forested ridges close in on the road and Sassafras Mountain, the state's highest peak, towers 3,554 feet (1,083 m) above the hills. Soon the highway soars above Keowee River and continues to the small town of Walhalla. It then veers south, back into a flat, rural landscape. The final stop is at Lake Hartwell State Recreation Area, which has a pretty shoreline, picnic tables, boating, and a nature trail.

I STAY A WHILE I Shortly after crossing the Keowee River, you can turn onto Rte. 37-25 for 5 miles (8 km) to Devils Fork State Park on the shores of mountain-ringed Lake Jocassee. The lake is popular for trout fishing and souls adving, or you can take a boat ride to see the many waterfalls that feed the lake. Hiking and nature trails offer good opportunities to enjoy the park's spring flowers and fall foliage. The park has a campground and holiday cabins. FROM: Gaffney, South Carolina
TO: Lake Hartwell State
Recreation Area, South Carolina
ROADS: SC. 11, U.S. 276
DISTANCE: 112 miles (180 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Peach bloom
peaks in May, the fall foliage in
mid-October.
PLANNING: The byway makes a
good alternative to 1-85 if
you're not in a hurry.



A hiking trail skirts the shoreline of one of the lakes at Table Rock State Park



The bright flowers of yellow trillium, a characteristic bloom of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in April and May.

I TENNESSEE | NORTH CAROLINA |

NEWFOUND GAP ROAD

From hardwood forests to alpine spruce and fir, finely colored by more than 1,500 different species of flowering plants, this road through a gap in the Appalachian Mountains in eastern Tennessee is a path through a botanical paradise.

et in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, this beautiful road sets off from the Sugarlands Visitor Center through a forest of red maples, white oaks, tulip trees, and magnolias. Massive Mount LeConte comes into view after about 2 miles (3 km) as the road begins to ascend, bringing the twin peaks of Chimney Tops into sight. The road curves dramatically here, and northern hardwoodsdominate the slopes. To negotiate the complex geography of the mountains, the route goes through a tunnel and then loops up, around, and over itself. Anakeesta Ridge, about 8 miles (13 km) farther on, is characterized by rocky outcrops, Fraser fir, and red spruce. From sky-high Morton Overlook, you can peer down into Sugarlands Valley or up at the notch in the State Line Range, where $Newfound\ Gap\ links\ Tennessee\ and\ North\ Carolina.\ Even\ better\ views\ await\ around\ the\ corner,$ from Newfound Gap Overlook, at 5,048 feet (1,539 m) the road's highest point. You can take a 7-mile (11 km) detour here, along a spur road to Clingmans Dome, the highest peak in the park (this road is closed in winter). From the parking lot at the peak, you can take a short walk to a lookout tower offering 360-degree views of the park's main summits. Otherwise, continue downhill on the Newfound Gap Road, passing the Oconaluftee Valley Overlook on Thomas Divide ridge. The road then switches back downhill, with breathtaking views of the Smoky Mountains. Once past Webb Overlook, you delve into deciduous forest and follow the Oconaluftee River toward Mingus Mill, a working mill built in 1886. At the Oconaluftee Visitor Center, you can visit Mountain Farm Museum, which explains the life of a pioneer in the early days of the U.S.

FROM: Sugarlands Visitor Center, Tennessee
To: Oconaluftee Visitor Center, North Carolina
ROAD: Newfound Gap Road
DISTANCE: 40 miles (64 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1 hour
WHEN TO GO: Blooms are best from mid-March through July.
PLANNING; govnps



CROWLEY'S RIDGE PARKWAY

Rising more than 150 feet (46 m) above the surrounding plains, this thin strip of upland between the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers is a distinctive landmark. The drive runs from southeastern Missouri to eastern Arkansas along the top of the ridge.

nly 14 miles (23 km) of the parkway lie in Missouri, but during this brief section on U.S. 62 from Malden, you can see the unique geology of Crowley's Ridge. Start by taking a short loop hiking trail through Morris State Park to view some of the area's unusual plants, such as tulip $poplar, American \, beech, and \, cucumber \, trees. \, After \, crossing \, the \, St. \, Francis \, River \, into \, Arkansas, on \, Ark. \, Constant \,$ 141, you soon enter the town of St. Francis, near Chalk Bluff Battlefield Park (see Excursion). Ernest $Heming way\ visited\ the\ small\ town\ of\ Piggott,\ just\ along\ the\ parkway,\ several\ times\ between\ 1927\ and$ 1940, and wrote most of A Farewell to Arms here at his second wife's family home. Continue along the ridge on Ark. 135, through pastures and croplands and the small city of Paragould to reach Crowley's Ridge State Park, where you can explore the local scenery on a network of hiking trails or take a rest beside one of the pretty lakes. The route rejoins Ark. 141, and 20 miles (32 km) farther on reaches Jonesboro, the largest city on the ridge and home to Arkansas State University, whose museum has exhibitson paleontology and Native American and pioneer history, as well as a fine glassware and ceramics collection. Visit Village Creek State Park, down Ark. 163 and 284, for a tour of the area's natural history and to tackle the hiking and horseriding trails around woodland, streams, and lakes. It was through here, in 1829, that the Creek, Chickasaw, and Cherokee Nations were marched away from their homes in the East to new Indian Territories farther west, along the Arkansas section of what became known as the Trail of Tears (now called the Military Road Trail). The parkway continues south on Ark. 1 to Marianna and Ark. 44 to the old river port of Helena-West-Helena.

EXCURSION 1 History lovers can take a short detour to the Chalk Bluff Battlefield Park, one of the bestpreserved sites in the area, 5 miles (4.8 km) northwest of \$L. Francis. During the Civil War, Confederate and Union armies fought here repeatedly for control of the startegic St. Francis River crossing, which marks the border between Missouri and Arkansas. The short Chalk Bluff Hiking Trail around the preserved portion of the battlefield has markers and interpretive panels along the way.



FROM: Malden, Missouri
TO: Helena-West-Helena,
Arkansas
ROADS: U.S. 62, Ark. 141, 135, 1t
284, 1, 44, minor connecting
roads
DISTANCE: 212 miles (341 km)
DRIVING TIME: 55 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING:
mostateparks.com

Most of St. Francis National Forest lies on Crowley's Ridge. It is replete with pools, lakes, rivers, and waterfalls





 $The \ road\ swoops\ through\ Ouachita\ National\ Forest,\ the\ largest\ national\ forest\ in\ the\ American\ South.$

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Just beyond Winding Stair Mountain, you can stop and admire views of the Poteau River Valley, Cedar Lake, and Lake Wister from the **Emerald Vista**Overlook.

The Robert S. Kerr Arboretum, about midway along the drive, has exhibits on forest environments as well as three interpretive trails through pine and hardwood forests.

Rich Mountain Fire Tower was built in 1952 to keep a watchful eye on Ouachita National Forest. The views from the top are among the most spectacular in the park

OKLAHOMA | ARKANSAS |

TALIMENA SCENIC BYWAY

This short road across the Oklahoma/Arkansas border was built in the 1960s to give access to the wonderful views of the Ouachita Mountains—a favorite hunting spot of the Choctaw Indians and still full of wildlife.

uachita is a Native American word meaning "good hunting grounds," and the Ouachita National Forest still holds plentiful deer, squirrel, and a host of other wildlife. The byway starts at the forest visitor center, 7 miles (11 km) northeast of Talihina on Okla. 1. Just beyond the visitor center is Choctaw Vista, which overlooks the dark blue hills and valleys through which the Choctaw traveled on their way west from the Mississippi on the Trail of Tears following the 1830 Indian Removal Act. The road cuts through a forest of shortleaf pine and scrub oak, with prairie grasses such as little bluestem covering the ground. Panorama Vista, about 5 miles (8 km) into the forest, has sweep as little bluestem covering the ground. ing views of mountains and the small farming villages of the Holson Valley. The soaring updrafts here attract hang-gliding enthusiasts as well as golden eagles, vultures, and hawks. Past Horse Thief Springs (Mile 16), the road snakes back and forth down Winding Stair Mountain (see $Highlights), providing \ constantly \ shifting \ views, and \ continues \ to \ Robert \ S. \ Kerr \ Arboretum$ and Nature Center (Mile 23) (see Highlights). The byway now follows the crest of Rich Mountain ($^{\rm N}$ tain for several miles through dwarf oaks stunted by ice storms and wind. Entering Arkansas, the road becomes Ark. 88 and leads into Queen Wilhelmina State Park, which has dramatic views of Rich Mountain's crest. Three miles (5 km) east of the park, you reach Rich Mountain Fire Tower (see Highlights), which at 2,681 feet (817 m) is the highest point on the route. The drive ends at the visitor information center in Mena, an old timber, railroad, and cattle town.

FROM: Talihina, Oklahoma
TO: Mena, Arkansas
ROADS: Okla. 1/U.S. 271, Ark. 88
DISTANCE: 54 miles (87 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1 to 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring bloom
occurs in April and May;
fall foliage peaks from midOctober through early
November.
PLANNING:
arkansastateparks.com



14 I DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

GOURMET ROAD TRIPS

In this rugged corner of northwestern Nebraska, scenery seems to change from mile to mile as hilly farm and ranch land mingle with prairie, high buttes and ridges, steep gullies, and clear streams.

rom the old frontier town of Gordon, a small community in Nebraska's rural heart, drive west on U.S. 20 along the western reaches of the desolate grassy desert known as Sand Hills, which lies 10 miles (16 km) to the south and east; ahead are flat plains where trees and cattle are scarce. Drive through the isolated towns of Rushville and Hay Springs, and on to the furrowed uplands of Pine Ridge,a narrow, 100-mile (160 km) long escarpment that defines the edge of Nebraska's High Plains. The forested hills of ponderosa pine and deciduous trees are home to bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, and wild turkeys. Across the ridge, the old fur-trading town of Chadron has a row of handsome, two-story, Western-style buildings along Main Street. A 10-mile (16 km) detour to the south of town on U.S. 385 $takes \ you \ to \ Chadron \ State \ Park, \ an \ excellent \ stop \ for \ horseback \ riding, \ swimming, \ and \ hiking.$ Back on U.S. 20, continue west along the White River-to the north you can see rolling hills, to the south the first buttes of the Badlands. Crawford (see Excursion), 24 miles (39 km) farther on, was an important town in the Old West and is now known chiefly for Fort Robinson State $\,$ Park. The fort itself dates from the Indian Wars of the 1870s—Chief Crazy Horse, of Little Bighorn fame, was killed here. During World War II, the fort housed German prisoners. Fifteen miles (24 km) north of Crawford on Nebr. 2, you can visit Oglala National Grassland, a popular haunt for camping and hunting, as well as Toadstool Geologic Park, named for its strange, mushroom-shaped rocky outcrops.

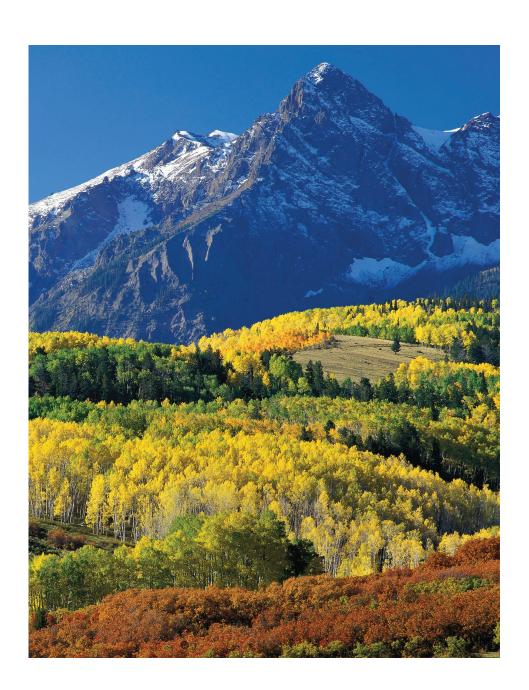
I EXCURSION I Twenty-three miles (37 km) southwest of Crawford is **Agate Fossil Beds National Monument**, where you can follow a 2-mile C8 km) walk around the fossilized remains of mammals that lived between 13 and 25 million years ago. The site is best known for the surviving evidence of species such as *Amorpus*—part horse, part giraffe, and part tapir—and *Menoceras*, a pomy-sized rhinoceros. The Cook Collection in the museum includes more than 500 unique Native American artifacts collected by Captain James Cook, owner of the Agate Springs Cattle Ranch in the late 19th century.

FROM: Gordon, Nebraska
To: Crawford, Nebraska
ROADS: U.S. 20, 385, Nebr. 2
DISTANCE: 67 miles (108 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING:
visitnebraska.com



 $Around\ Chadron,\ prairie\ grasslands\ have\ been\ turned\ into\ hay fields\ that\ extend\ to\ the\ horizon\ constraints.$





SAN JUAN SKYWAY

The skyway follows a meandering course across southern Colorado's San Juan Mountains, past old mining towns and through the desert to Mesa Verde National Park, reaching a $height\ of\ more\ than\ 10,000\ feet\ (3,048\ m)\ three\ times\ on\ its\ journey\ through\ the\ sky.$



ners drive cattle along Girl Scout Road near the old railroad and ranching town of Ridgway

he Uncompangre Valley narrows below mountains that rise at least 6,000 feet (1,829 m) above the river as U.S. 550 travels southeast from Ridgway, bouncing from side to side between redrock cliffs and forested foothills. Look around the historic district of the mountain town of Our ay, which dates from the 1880 s gold- and silver-mining boom, before continuing into the mountains.Waterfalls spill from Uncompangre Gorge to the right of the road as Abrams Mountain looms overhead. After a series of hairpin bends, you are confronted by a group of vivid peaks, Red Mountain Nos. 1, 2, and 3, whose slopes are streaked with red and orange gravel. The road curves around them, alongside $\frac{1}{2}$ $a\ meadow\ and\ past\ old\ shacks\ and\ gravel\ heaps,\ remnants\ of\ the\ area's\ mining\ past,\ before\ ascending$ to the 11,075-foot (3,375 m) Red Mountain Pass and descending to cross the broad Animas River Valley. At the junction with Colo. 110, turn left to Silverton (see Highlights), where you might come across the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad steaming into view.

Back on U.S. 550, climb Sultan Mountain to Molas Pass for fine views of the West Needle Mountains and Grenadier Range rising over tiny Molas Lake. The road winds for 7 miles (11 km) to Coal Bank Pass before leaving the mountains for plateau and canyon country. Hermosa Cliffs soon appear above a lush canyon of grass and hayfields. From the former mining town of Durango, follow U.S. 160 west through $minor \, canyons \, and \, mesas \, as \, La \, Plata \, Mountains \, rise \, to \, the \, north \, over \, a \, dark \, forest. \, After \, visiting \, Mesa \, and \, respectively a contract of the forest of the for$ Verde National Park (see Highlights), continue along U.S. 160 toward Cortez, then follow Colo. 145 north $beside the \ river to \ Dolores (see \ Highlights), back into the San \ Juan \ Mountains. After the incredible \ views$ $of San \, Juan \, Crest \, at \, 10,222 - foot \, (3,116 \, m) \, Lizard \, Head \, Pass, \, glide \, across \, a \, meadow \, toward \, Ophir \, Needles, \, details a constant of the contraction of$ $past\,Trout\,Lake\,and\,huge, glaciated\,valleys.\,Turn\,right\,at\,the\,T-junction\,to\,Telluride, with\,its\,magnificent$ Victorian downtown district and 365-foot (111 m) Bridal Veil Falls. You can take a ride on the gondola that links Telluride with the ski area of Mountain Village to enjoy some outstanding mountain views. $From \, Telluride, Colo. \, 145 \, and \, the \, San \, Miguel \, River \, head \, through \, a \, sandstone-cliff \, canyon \, to \, Placerville. \, The \, Color \, and \,$ Turn right on Colo. 62 for 11 miles (18 km) to the Dallas Divide and return to Ridgway.

OPPOSITE: At 14,150 feet (4,313 m) high, Mount Sneffels dominates the beautiful scenery around Ridgway.

HIGHLIGHTS |

San Juan County Historical Museu in Silverton tells the story of the region's railroad and mining past.

Mesa Verde National Park protects Rangers lead tours of the major buildings. Views from the mesa are extraordinary.

South of Dolores, make a 10-minute detour west onto Colo. 184 from Colo 145 for the Anasazi Heritage Center, which explains the evolution of the ancient Puebloans. Self-guided trails lead to two ruins.

FROM: Loop route from Ridgway, Colorado ROADS: U.S. 550, Colo. 110, U.S. 160, Colo. 145, 62 **DISTANCE**: 233 miles (375 km) DRIVING TIME: 5 hours WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall PLANNING: The section from Silverton to Ouray is also known as the Million Dollar Highway. coloradobyways.org



HILLS & MOUNTAINS | 17

BEARTOOTH HIGHWAY

Southern Montana's foothills cower beneath the black mass of the Beartooth Plateau, whose sharpened peaks prick the sky. The drive meanders across the plateau and through the varied Yellowstone region.

ollowing Rock Creek from Montana's ranching and mining town of Red Lodge, the

Beartooth All-American Road passes grassy hills that soon develop into forested mountains and climbs toward the 1,800-foot (550 m) cliffs that enclose the valley head. The next 5 miles (8 km) include dramatic switchbacks that culminate at Vista Point (9,200 $feet/2,\!804\,m), where you can take a short path to a promontory with views across Rock Creek Canyon$ and Hellroaring Plateau. Back on the road, trees gradually give way to alpine tundra. The route cuts back to the rim of the canyon, and narrow turnouts provide views of glacial lakes, including Twin Lakes1,000 feet (305 m) below. In the Beartooth Pass ski area, you can see the jagged peaks of the Absaroka Range breaking the southwest horizon. Continue through wildflower meadows to the 10,947-foot (3,337 m) high Beartooth Pass, where only marmots, squirrels, and mountain goats survive year-round. $From \ here, the \ road \ descends \ through \ scattered \ is lands \ of \ pine \ and \ spruce, \ wild flowers, \ and \ hundreds$ of small lakes. As you approach the turnoff to Island Lake campground, the Absaroka Range's 11,708- $\,$ $foot \, (3,\!569\,m)\,Pilot\,Peak\,and\,11,\!313-foot \, (3,\!448\,m)\,Index\,Peak\,swing\,into\,view.\,Continuing\,your\,descent$ through a forest of lodgepole and whitebark pines toward Beartooth Butte, you pass a great picnic spot at Beartooth Lake, and as the road breaks out of the trees, look across the canyon to your left to see the $cascading\ Beartooth\ Falls.\ The\ road\ follows\ the\ flank\ of\ the\ plateau\ to\ a\ bridge\ over\ silvery\ Lake\ Creek.$ From Crazy Creek Campground the road picks up Clarks Fork River and passes through the old mining camp of Cooke City to reach the northeast entrance to outstanding Yellowstone National Park.

I EXCURSION I The Chief Joseph Scenic Highway follows part of the route taken by the Nez Perce on their journey from Oregon under Chief Joseph. The 46-mile (74 km) drive follows Wyo. 290 along the northeastern edge of Yellowstone National Park between Cooke (Gry and Cody, Wyoming, with stunning yews of Beartooth Peak and the Yellowstone River. A few miles north of Cody, the road crosses Sunlight Creek Bridge, which spans the sheer cliffs of Sunlight Gorge.

MONTANA (1) 202

MONTANA (1) 202

Red Edge | Salett | Sal

FROM: Red Lodge, Montana
TO: Yellowstone National Park
northeast entrance, Montana
ROAD: U.S. 212/Beartooth
All-American Road
DISTANCE: 69 miles (111 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 to 3 hours
WHEN TO 60: The route is open
from Memorial Day weekend
to October—the exact opening
and closing dates depend
on the weather. Aspens are
glorious in late September.
PLANNING:
beartoothhighway.com

Granite outcrops, clumps of firs, and small pools near Island Lake in the Absaroka Range







The Boise Basin Museum in Idaho City tells the history of this gold-rush town.

I IDAHO I

SAWTOOTH & PONDEROSA PINE

 $This \, spectacular \, drive, \, a \, combination \, of \, two \, scenic \, by ways \, through \, central \, Idaho's$ wilderness area, ascends from the desert floor around Boise, the state capital, into the $heights\ of\ the\ Sawtooth\ Range,\ before\ winding\ back\ down\ to\ the\ volcanic\ plain\ below.$

limbing into the brown hills above Boise, the Ponderosa Pine Scenic Byway (Idaho 21) follows the Boise River through a twisting canyon and into thick forest. As the road approaches the $\bullet \ \, \text{old mining town of Idaho City, you can see heaps of cobblestones, leavings from the 1860s gold } \\$ rush, scattered around. Idaho 21 continues climbing to Mores Creek Summit. Ten miles (16 km) farther on you enter Lowman Burn, where roadside signs chart the impact of the wildfires of 1989—one such $sign, a few \, minutes \, past \, Lowman \, village, overlooks \, Kirkham \, Hot \, Springs, where \, the \, South \, Fork \, Payette$ River flows through a granite chasm. After 24 miles (39 km), the road follows the South Fork through a ponderosa pine forest to reach snowcapped Banner Summit, then passes broad meadows—ringed by a forest that is home to elk, deer, and hawks—before the Sawtooth Range bursts into view

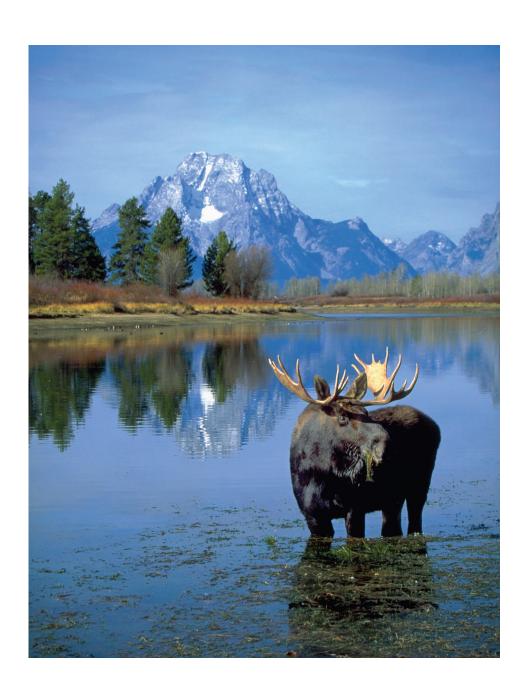
At Stanley, turn right onto Idaho 75, the start of the Sawtooth Drive, and follow the Salmon River through Sawtooth Valley, home to peaks that are more than 10,000 feet (3,048 m) high. Many of them lie within the Sawtooth Wilderness, an enticing landscape for day hikes. The biggest lake in the area, $Red fish\ Lake, is lined\ with\ beaches\ set\ against\ pine\ forests\ and\ imposing\ mountains-follow\ signs\ off$ $the\ main\ road.\ Back\ on\ Idaho\ 75, continue\ past\ Sawtooth\ City\ and\ Vienna,\ both\ old\ mining\ towns,\ and$ $up \ to \ Galena \ Overlook. Soon \ you \ top \ Galena \ Summit \ and \ descend \ into \ Big \ Wood \ River \ Valley, with \ the$ Boulder Mountains rising to your left. A mile (1.6 km) beyond the sign to Magic Dam are the Shoshone Ice Caves, an ice-filled lava tube, and another 8 miles (13 km) brings you to enormous underground tunnels at Mammoth Cave. The drive ends in the agricultural town of Shoshone.



To: Shoshone, Idaho ROADS: Idaho 21/Ponder Scenic Byway, Idaho 75/ Sawtooth Drive DISTANCE: 246 miles (396 km) DRIVING TIME: 6 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Winter weather can be severe. visitidaho.org

FROM: Boise, Idaho

HILLS & MOUNTAINS | 19



GOURMET ROAD

CENTENNIAL SCENIC BYWAY

The long, undulating, doglegging Centennial Scenic Byway winds through the mountains and river valleys of the Rockies in northwestern Wyoming, passing the Tetons, the Snake River, and the Wind River Range along the way.



 $Fremont\ Peak\ and\ Island\ Lake,\ in\ the\ Wind\ River\ Range,\ can\ be\ reached\ via\ hiking\ trails\ north\ of\ Pinedale.$

ise with the cowboys of Dubois (see Highlights) to catch a glimpse of the morning sun on the Teton Mountains. Climb from the town past the eastern flank of the Wind River Range on U.S. 26, with the Wind River meandering alongside you. After around 20 miles (32 km), Breccia $Cliffs \ and \ Pinnacle \ Buttes \ burst \ into \ view \ above \ the \ tree \ line. \ Stop \ at \ Falls \ Campground \ to \ explore \ the$ waterfall before continuing on U.S. 26 up a steep incline forested with Engelmann spruce, silverybarked subalpine fir, and lodgepoll pine. Moose, elk, and bears visit the meadows. After crossing $To gwotee\ Pass,\ descend\ to\ Teton\ Range\ Overlook\ to\ gaze\ at\ Wyoming's\ best-known\ mountains.\ U.S.$ 26 now slopes down to the floodplain of Buffalo Fork River, soon entering Grand Teton National Park. At Moran Junction turn south through wetlands inhabited by moose, elk, and bison and across gentle $terrain\ toward\ Snake\ River\ Overlook,\ which\ provides\ a\ classic\ view\ of\ 13,770-foot\ (4,197\ m)\ high\ Grand$ $Teton\ and\ its\ neighboring\ peaks.\ Pass\ through\ the\ valley\ of\ Jackson\ Hole\ and\ in\ another\ 10\ miles\ (16)$ km) you reach the tourist mecca of Jackson (see Highlights), with its galleries, restaurants, bars, and famous ski resorts. Seven miles (11 km) on, follow the Snake River to Hoback Junction, where the Hoback River joins the Snake to rush into the Snake River Canyon. Drive up Hoback Canyon on U.S. 189/191, dropping out of the mountains past Bondurant and onto the flatlands of Green River Valley, with the $ancient\ Wind\ River\ Range\ coming\ into\ view.\ Take\ a\ short\ detour\ north\ to\ watch\ the\ sun\ set\ at\ Fremont$ Lake, stretched out below the Winds. U.S. 189/191 continues into nearby Pinedale and the Museum of the Mountain Man (see Highlights).

I EXCURSION I At Moran Junction you can take the Teton Park Drive, which runs for 25 miles (40 km) through the heart of the magnificent Teton Mountains. Oxbow Bend Turnout has classic views of Mount Moran and the Snake River. At Jackson Lake Junction, you can turn onto Signal Mountain Road and drive to the summit of Signal Mountain, with grand views of the Tetons. When you reach North Jenny Lake Junction, follow the loop road to Cathedral Group Turnout, with close-up views of Mount Owen, Teewinot Mountain, and Grand Teton. The drive rejoins the Centennial Scenic Byway at Moose Junction.

OPPOSITE: A moose feeds on vegetation in the Snake River, with Mount Moran in the distance.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

The **Wind River Historical Center** in Dubois has displays on the pioneer, archaeological, and natural history of the region.

The **National Elk Refuge** in the town of Jackson is home to some 10,000 elk every winter, viewable by a sleigh ride from the refuge headquarters.

The National Museum of Wildlife

Art, situated 2.5 miles (4 km) north of Jackson, has fine wildlife and nature displays

Pinedale's Museum of the Mountain Man explores the history of the fur-trappers who roamed this region

FROM: Dubois, Wyoming
TO: Pinedale, Wyoming
ROADS: U.S. 26/Colo. 287,
U.S. 189/191
DISTANCE: 162 miles (261 km)
DRIVING TIME: 4 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: Grand Teton
National Park has almost 200
miles (320 km) of hiking trails.
travelwyoming.com



HILLS & MOUNTAINS | 21



 $Yuccas\ grow\ in\ Humboldt-Toiyabe\ National\ Forest,\ which\ covers\ a\ huge,\ unforested\ area.$

NEVADA

JEWEL OF THE RUBY MOUNTAINS

Drive along Lamoille Canyon in northeastern Nevada and you'll see dozens of small, elegant waterfalls spill from the cliffs above as the gentle, glaciated descent breaks out from subalpine forests onto the high desert plains.

he Ruby Mountains seem to burst from the flat valley floor as you approach the well-marked start of the Lamoille Canyon Byway (FR 660), 20 miles (32 km) southeast of the town of Elko on Nev. 227. The byway crosses Lamoille Creek, through a lush corridor of cottonwoods, willows, and aspens, and past waterfalls of melting snow cascading over the canyon's wall, as it enters Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. For a quick orientation on the canyon's features, stop at Powerhouse Picnic Area. As you head on to Glacier Overlook, a number of the peaks in front of you top 10,000 feet (3,048 m). An exhibit at the overlook explains the area's glacial history, pointing out the path the ice took as it carved out the valley. Thomas Canyon Campground, 2 miles (3 km) ahead, sits at the mouth of a glacial side canyon. Put on your hiking boots and take the tricky trail up the floor of Thomas Canyon to wildflower meadows and forests of limber and whitebark pine. Another good walk is Changing Canyon Nature Trail, starting 1.5 miles (2.4 km) up the road at the pull-off for Hanging Valley. Farther along the road, Terraces Picnic Area is an off-road spot where you can stop for views of a 1,500-foot (457 m) cliff of metamorphic rock swirled with light-colored granite.

Continue past gently undulating meadows of grasses, sedges, and wildflowers as willow thickets cloak the canyon's meandering course. Within 2 miles (3 km) you'll arrive at Road's End, where a ring of peaks rises from the forest, stopping the byway in its tracks. The 33-mile (53 km) Ruby Crest National Recreation Trail starts from here, leading into 90.000 acres (36.422 ha) of forests, lakes, meadows, and glacial peaks that are home to bighorn sheep, mountain goats, and eagles. You don't have to hike far to see the backcountry: 2 miles (3 km) away from Road's End, in a glacial cirque, is Island Lake, and you can fish for brookies at Lamoille Lake, 2 miles (3 km) up Ruby Crest.

FROM: Elko, Nevada
To: Road's End, Nevada
Roads: Nev. 227, FR 660/
Lamoille Canyon Byway
DISTANCE: 44 miles (71 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO 60: Spring through fall
PLANNING: There is a selfguided tour signposted along
the way, travelnevada.com



| ARIZONA |

THE TWISTING CORONADO TRAIL

 $Navigate \ your \ way \ around \ the \ hundreds \ of \ switch backs \ that \ make \ up \ U.S. \ 191. \ The \ rewards$ $are \ great, for this \ winding \ route \ through \ eastern \ Arizona \ is \ one \ of \ the \ least \ traveled \ in \ the$ U.S.A., full of fun turns and excellent views.

fter exploring the old copper-mining town of Clifton, head north on U.S. 191 and in 10 miles $(16\,km)\,you'll\,have\,a\,splendid\,view\,of\,the\,3-mile\,(5\,km)\,wide,\,6-mile\,(10\,km)\,long\,Phelps\,Dodge$ Copper Corporation Morenci Mine, one of the largest artificial holes on the planet. From the observation point, the huge trucks hauling 125,000 tons of copper a day look tiny. Past here, the road runs through narrow and colorful Chase Canvon and then enters forest as it ascends higher into the mountains. Cherry Lodge Picnic Area, about 10 miles (16 km) farther north, is a pleasant place to rest. $Farther into the mountains, you can stop at a parking area and take a 1-mile (1.6 \ km) hike up to the top$ of 8,786-foot (2,678 m) Rose Peak, where a fire lookout tower provides great views of the surrounding terrain. The highway continues up Mogollon Rim to a 9,184-foot (2,799 m) overlook at Blue Vista (turn $left at \, Milepost \, 225), from \, where \, you \, can \, see \, an \, endless \, parade \, of \, ridges \, and \, mountains \, to \, the \, southeast \, and \, ridges \, ridges \, and \, ridges \, ridges$ and west, including Mount Graham, 70 miles (113 km) away. You soon enter an area of spruce, fir, $and \ aspen \ forests \ around \ Hannagan \ Meadow \ lodge \ and \ store. \ The \ road \ skirts \ the \ eastern \ edge \ of \ the$ White Mountains for the next 22 miles (35 km), passing aspen groves and alpine meadows to reach the mountain town of Alpine, which has places to stay, restaurants, and supplies. Farther north still is $10,\!912\text{-}foot\,(3,\!326\,km)\,Escudilla\,Mountain, an old\,volcano\,and\,Arizona's\,third\,highest\,peak, at\,the\,heart\,Arizona's\,third\,highest\,peak, at the\,heart\,Arizona's\,third\,highest\,peak, at the\,heart\,Arizona's\,third Arizona's\,third Arizo$ $of Escudilla \ Wilderness \ Area. \ As \ U.S.\ 191\ drops \ down\ to\ the\ volcanic\ field\ around\ Springerville, you\ pass$ Nelson Reservoir, which is popular for boating and fishing.

HIDDEN HISTORY | Casa Malpais, or House of the Badlands, is a National Historic Landmark, 2 miles (Skm) north of Springerville, close to the Coronado Trail. The Puebloan settlement, which was inhabited by the Mogollon people during the 13th century, has been preserved to an unusually high level due to its mysterious abandonment around. Au 1400. You can tour the ruins with a guide, and, with prior booking, it is also possible to join excavations at the site. A visitor center and museum on Main Street in Springerville have artifacts from the complex on display.



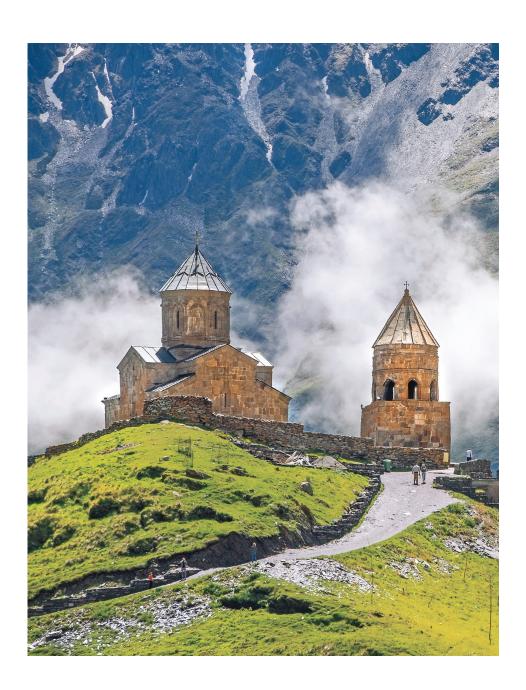
FROM: Clifton, Arizona To: Springerville, Arizona ROAD: U.S. 191 DISTANCE: 123 miles (198 km) DRIVING TIME: 4 to 5 hours WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall (the road is often closed in

winter)

PLANNING: The length of vehicles on the road is limited to 40 feet (12 m). Watch out for sharp curves and steep drop-offs. tourism.az.gov

The Coronado Trail takes a looping course as it ascends Chase Canyon.





THE TOP

1 NORTH YUNGUS ROAD, BOLIVIA

Bolivia's legendary El Camino de la Muerte (Troad of death') clings to the side of a mega-deep Andes canyon along the old route between La Paz and the nation's Amazon region. Although the road is only around 20 miles (32 km) long, its narrow, unpaved surface, scarcity of guardrails, and precipitous drops makes the journey very dangerous.

PLANNING: North Yungus Road is best done as a guided downhill mountain biking trip through outfitters like Gravity Bolivia. *gravitybolivia.com*

2 PRITHVI HIGHWAY, NEPAL

The main road from Kathmandu to Pokhara passes through humungous foothills that anywhere else on the planet would be considered proper mountains. Side roads lead to spectacular Gorkha Durbar fort and palace, and historic Bandipur town.

PLANNING: Whitewater rafting is popular on the Trishuli River, downstream from Baireni on the Prithvi Highway. welcomenepal.com

3 HALEAKALÄ HIGHWAY, HAWAII

Hawaiis most spectacular road trip is the vertiginous route to the summit of 10,023-foot (3,055 m) Haleakalā volcano on the island of Maui. As the road makes its way up 32 switchbacks, the terrain morphs from lush forest and flower plantations to a Martian-like high-altitude desert. From the summit visitor center, trails lead around and down into the immense crater.

PLANNING: Driving to the summit for sunrise has become so popular that the National Park Service now requires advance reservations. nps.qov/hale

4 GLACIER COUNTRY DRIVE,

NEW ZEALAND

Highway 6 meanders down the west coast of New Zealand's South Island between Franz Josef and Wanaka, a journey through the Southern Alps with glaciers, waterfalls, and whitewater rivers along the way. Local outfitters along the route offer scenic helicopter tours, jetboat adventures, hikes around glaciers, kayaking, and even tandem skydwing.

PLANNING: Campsites are available at Lake Paringa, Haast village, Cameron Flat, and Boundary Creek for those breaking the drive into multiple days. glaciercountry.co.nz

10

MOUNTAIN ADVENTURES

These spectacular top-of-theworld routes offer a chance to do more than just drive. Activities ranging from glacier hikes to kayaking. helicopter rides, and gorillawatching are all available.

5 DALTON HIGHWAY, ALASKA

it's all about spotting wildlife—caribou, musk ox, grizziles, polar bears, and other northland creatures—along this rugged route through the wilds of northern Alaska. The 414-mile (666 km) drive from Livengood to Prudhoe Bay on the Arctic Ocean traverses the Brooke Range.

PLANNING: Driving the Dalton Highway is especially scenic in the fall, when the boreal forest and tundra are ablaze in autumn colors. blm.gov/visit/dalton-highway

6 COL DE TURINI, FRANCE

This epic route through the French Alps features dozens of wicked switchbacks along the 19 miles (31 km) between La Bolliène-Vésubie and Sospel. Among the highest paved roads in Europe, the route is one of the toughest legs of the annual Monte Carlo Rally and sometimes features in the Tour de France ovel race.

PLANNING: Spike your heart rate even higher via the nearby Piera Cava ziplines and Via Ferrata Lantosque climbing circuit. puremontagne.fr/en

7 QUEEN ELIZABETH TO BWINDI, UGANDA

Linking Uganda's top wildlife areas, this iconic safari route links the big lakes and savanna plains of Queen Elizabeth National

OPPOSITE: Mount Kazbegi looms over Holy Trinity Church, near the village of Gergeti and close to the Georgian Military Road. Park (QENP) with the lush cloud-shrouded Kigezi Highlands of the Albertine Rift Mountains. After passing through a teagrowing region, the route culminates in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, where rangers lead treks to view mountain gorillas.

PLANNING: Adventure Consults offers a 4WD safari along this route, which includes both QENP and Bwindi. adventureconsults.com

8 GEORGIAN MILITARY ROAD, GEORGIA

Despite its ominous-sounding namederived from the fact that it was initially built by tsarist Russian troops—this scenic highway from Tbillis into the Caucasus Mountains is now a popular tourist route. Drive highlights include 17th-century Ananuri Fortress, the historic Armenian Orthodox churches of Mtskheta, and Kazbegi National Park in the high Caucasus.

PLANNING: Kazbegi National Park can be explored on foot, or by horse, quad bike, and ever helicopter. nationalparks see fen (site / kazbeging)

9 CARRETERA AUSTRAL, CHILE

Stretching 770 miles (1,240 km) from Puerto Montt to Villa O'Higgins, Chile's Southern Highway offers an adventurous journey through the Patagonian Andes. Flanked by lakes, glaciers, and snow-capped volcanoes, the route includes three ferry crossings and access to more than a dozen national parks.

PLANNING: Fly fishing, whitewater rafting, and trekking count among the outdoor activities along the Carretera Austral. chile.travel/en/where-to-go/patagonia-and-antartica/carretera-austral

10 BLUE MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY, JAMAICA

The sinuous Newcastle-Buff Bay Road (Route B1) climbs up and over the Blue Mountains through the heart of Jamaica's coffee country and the often cloud-shrouded peaks of Blue Mountains National Park. Among the landmarks between Kingston and Buff Bay are Bob Marley's house on Hope Road (now a museum), Strawberry Hill, and Old Tavern

PLANNING: Jamaica Escapes can arrange a driver or help plan a detailed self-drive itinerary of the Blue Mountain route. jamaicaescapes

ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

I NEW MEXICO I TEXAS I

GUADALUPE DRIVE

In the deserts of southern New Mexico, beauty and history combine with some of the country's most fascinating spots, such as the old Western outlaw town of Lincoln, set against the dramatic escarpments of the Guadalupe Mountains.



The dunes of White Sands National Monument appear opalescent at sunrise.

Just east of 5,719-foot (1,743 m) San Augustin Pass, and overlooked by the needle-like spires of the Organ Mountains, lies the tranquil Aguirre Springs Campground. The 5.5-mile (8,8 km) entrance road winds around granite pillars and a rock garden to reach this high desert oasis—a perfect picnic spot.

From Aguirre Springs, head northeast on U.S. 70, flanked on the west by what a creative mind might imagine were 60-foot (18 m) waves on a snow-white sea. White Sands National Park, at around 275 square miles (712 km²), is the worlds largest gypsum dune system, created by crystals blown in from the dry bed of nearby Lake Lucero. About 60

miles (96 km) north of here, in 1945, the world's first atomic bomb was detonated with a huge rumble and an eerie light that inaugurated the nuclear age. The filled-in crater is still off-limits, except for some Saturdays from November through April. The area around the dunes is now a testing-ground for missiles, and the whole park is occasionally closed to the public. You can take the 16-mile (26 km) Dunes Drive through the desert (see page 150).

Continue northeast on U.S. 70 to Alamogordo (see Highlights), whose Holloman Air Force Base played a crucial role in America's space program. Following U.S. 54 north from Alamogordo, look for an old ranch road heading east to the Three Rivers

CLAIMS OF UFO SIGHTINGS In 1947, a top-secret U.S. government air balloon crashed in the desert outside Roswell, according to the U.S. government at least. Some 30 years later, however, UFO researchers claimed to have gathered evidence that the vehicle was in fact a spacecraft, that alien bodies had been recovered from the site, and that the government was engaged in a major cover-up. The incident has become the world's most famous "alien visitation" and put Roswell on the map, with the town holding an annual UFO Festival, at which people dress up in alien costumes, attend conferences, and enjoy a parade.

WALK FIVE MILES
ON THE ALKALI FLAT
TRAIL [IN WHITE
SANDS] TO FIND
A READY-MADE
MOONSCAPE, JUST
YOU AND BLEACHED
EARLESS LIZARDS
SURROUNDED BY
MILES OF PURE WHITE
GYPSUM DUNES.

-ROBERT EARLE HOWELLS

National Geographic write

Petroglyph Site, where more than 500 images of birds, humans, animals, and fish were carved into the rock more than 1,000 years ago by the Jornada Mogollon people.

Just west of Carrizozo, the Valley of Fires is one of the youngest lava deposits in the lower 48 states. About 1,500 years ago the flow erupted from several volcanoes in the area, solidifying into a 44-mile (71 km) long scar. For a good picnic spot, head east on U.S. 380 to Smokey Bear Historical Park, where the gardens re-create New Mexico's half-dozen biological life zones. Ten miles (16 km) farther along, U.S. 380 brings you to Lincoln State Monument, a town preserved from the gun-toting 1870s, when Billy the Kid participated in an orgy of violence known as the Lincoln County Wars and escaped from the courthouse by killing his two guards. The courthouse is now home to a museum.

Roswell, an old Western town, is best known for alleged alien visitations (see sidebar this page). After visiting the Historic District,





Stalagmites and stalactites fill the magnificent chambers of Carlsbad Caverns.

FROM: Aguirre Springs Recreation Area, New Mexico
To: El Paso, Texas
ROADS: U.S. 70, 54, 380, N. Mex. 2, U.S. 285, 62/180
DISTANCE: 452 miles (727 km)
DRIVING TIME: 8.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round, but best in spring, when the desert blooms, and fall PLANNING: nps.gov/gumo

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Alamogordo's **New Mexico Museum of Space History** has an excellent collection of early
rockets, and documents the postwar research
that took place in White Sands as the U.S. took its
first step into space.

South of Carlsbad is **Carlsbad Caverns National Park**. This underground labyrinth, one of the world's most extensive cave systems, has myriad rock formations, stalagmites, and stalactites. Self-guided and ranger-guided tours are available.

centered on Main and Second Street, stop at the Roswell Museum and Art Center, with its reproduction of the workshop of rocket-pioneer Robert Goddard, who tested his prototypes in the city from 1930 to 1941. A short way east of Roswell is Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge. More than 300 species of birds use these wetlands as a refuge in winter, and from October through February, sandhill cranes tread the lake, carefully avoiding the bobcats, foxes, and coyotes prowling the shore.

Turn south on N. Mex. 2 to Living Desert

Turn south on N. Mex. 2 to Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park, whose plants include more than 200 kinds of cactuses and succulents. Follow U.S. 285 south through Carlsbad to visit Carlsbad Caverns (see Highlights). Then, continue south on U.S. 62/180, passing the Guadalupe Range to the west. At Guadalupe Mountains National Park, a 2.5-mile (3.7 km) loop trail leads to Smith and Manzanita Springs and glades filled with fern, juniper, oak, and maple.

The road crosses into Texas and continues to El Paso, the largest city on the U.S./Mexican border, with many buildings in the Spanish-American architectural style known as Southwest Territorial. You can see a perfect example at Magoffin Homestead State Historic Site, a 19th-century, 19-bedroom house with original furnishings.



Two climbers tackle the Columbia Icefield in Jasper National Park.

CANADA

ALONG ICEFIELDS PARKWAY

Spectacular views of mountains, ridges, waterfalls, lakes, and more than 100 glaciers make the Icefields Parkway (Hwy. 93) between Lake Louise and Jasper in Alberta one of the world's greatest scenic highways. It's also Canada's highest road.

his sensational two-lane highway sweeps through the highest mountains in the Canadian Rockies. Heading north from Lake Louise, the road passes Hector Lake at the foot of the Waputik Range and soon rounds isolated Bow Peak as Crowfoot Glacier comes into view. Bow Lake, 3 miles (5 km) on, is fed by waters from Bow Glacier, one of eight glaciers descending from the Waputik Icefield. A little farther on, a short trail leads to a viewpoint above the blue-green waters of $glacier-fed\ Peyto\ Lake.\ The\ road\ soon\ descends\ into\ Mistaya\ Valley\ and\ passes\ Waterfowl\ Lake,\ which$ has awe-inspiring views of the mountains of the Continental Divide. As the Mistaya River drops down to the North Saskatchewan River basin, it carves through the narrow Mistaya Canyon, where you can take a short footpath beneath vertical walls. The town of Saskatchewan River Crossing lies 3 miles (5 km) ahead, and the valley is much narrower by the time the road reaches the gentle waterfalls of the Weeping Wall. The road ascends to Big Bend hairpin, with views of the North Saskatchewan Valley. Parker Ridge, 8 miles (13 km) on, has a steep trail rising 900 feet (275 m) through subalpine forest to an unforgettable view of the Saskatchewan Glacier. At Sunwapta Pass, the road crosses into the wildly $be autiful\ Jasper\ National\ Park\ and\ soon\ reaches\ the\ glaciers\ of\ the\ 1,000-foot\ (305\ m)\ deep\ Columbia$ Icefield, and farther on, the Sunwapta Falls, where the Sunwapta River crashes into a gorge. Athabasca Valley, north of the falls, is the Rockies' longest and widest valley. Continue on to Goats and Glaciers $Viewpoint, with great views of the valley's pine-covered floor. Athabasca Falls, another 3\,miles (5\,km)$ on, is a 70-foot (21 m) high spectacle of crashing water. The drive ends at Jasper.

I STAY A WHILE I The Columbia Leffield Center, opposite the Athabasca Glacier just past Sunwapta Pass, has exhibits explaining how glaciers form, grow, and retreat, as well as a natural history museum examining wildlife of the aligner zone. You can also hat lace a bust our of the glaciers from here. You can also hike to the edge of the Athabasca Glacier, but if you want to venture onto the ice itself, be sure to go with a guide as the glacier has deep, dangerous creavesses.

FROM: Lake Louise, Canada
To: Jasper, Canada
To: Jasper, Canada
Roao: Hwy, 93/Leffelds Parkway
DISTANCE: 143 miles (230 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours
WHEN TO 60: Spring through fall
PLANNING: The only services are
at Saskatchewan River Crossing,
where gas, food, and lodging
are available, and at the
Columbia Leffeld Center,
iceffeldsparkway.ca



28 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

PLANNING: Stop—or stay—at Paradise's historic Paradise Inn, built in 1917. visitrainier.com

AROUND MOUNT RAINIER

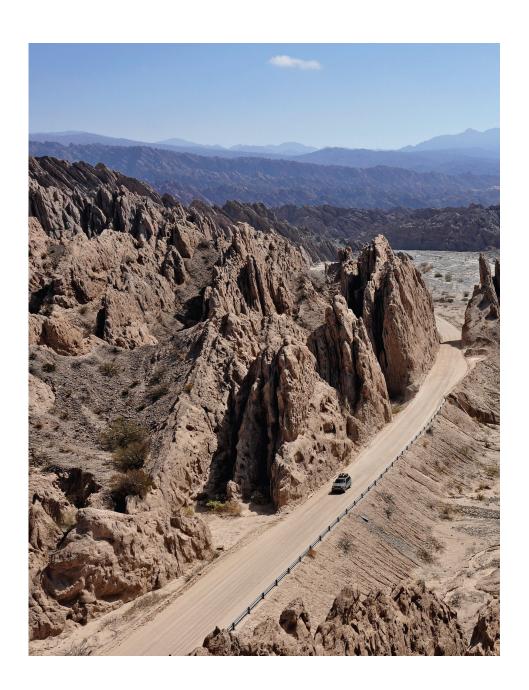
As you circle the 14,410-foot (4,392 m) Mount Rainier, southeast of Seattle, this great peak is seldom out of view during a drive that takes in old-growth forest, wilderness areas, glacial rivers, and subalpine meadows.

ven at this drive's starting point in Tacoma, 70 miles (113 km) to the northwest, Mount Rainier dominates the horizon. Head southeast on Wash. 167 and 410, following the White River to Mount Rainier's glacial northeastern flank and entering Federation Forest State Park. Fifteen minutes south on Wash. 410 you cross the boundary of Mount Rainier National Park; 5 miles (8 km) on, take the road to Sunrise, which at 6,400 feet (1,950 m) is the park's highest point accessible by car. The town has grand views and many hiking trails. Continue on Wash. 410 to Cayuse Pass, take Wash. 123 south for 11 miles (18 km), and turn west along Stevens Canyon Road to arrive at the Grove of the Patriarchs trail $head, where you can take \, a \, short, easy \, walk \, along \, the \, Ohana pecosh \, River \, to \, this \, grove \, of \, old-growth$ trees. The road next runs through pristine forest, past ridges and creeks, to Box Canyon/Muddy Fork Cowlitz, where you can see a deep, narrow gorge above crashing white water. Reflection Lakes, a few miles on, have rippling views of Mount Rainier. Finally, you reach Paradise. The town was named by early travelers, inspired by the surrounding flower-filled meadows. Many hiking trails $% \left(1\right) =\left(1\right) \left(1\right)$ through the meadows start in the town; the short Nisqually Vista Trail heads to the rim of the ravine above Nisqually Glacier, while the 6-mile (10 km) Skyline Trail ascends the glacier's eastern flank. From Paradise, Wash. 706 takes you through 10 miles (16 km) of waterfalls, forest, and rock pinnacles to arrive at Longmire, with a park museum, historic lodge, and hiking trails. Leaving the park, follow Wash. 706 west to Wash. 7, turn north, and continue on Wash. 161 and 167 back to Tacoma, with Mount Rainier looking on.

Forests and wildflower meadows surround Mount Rainier, a heavily glaciated, active volcano.



GOURMET ROAD TRIPS



1 HIGHWAY 89, ARIZONA/UTAH/ IDAHO/WYOMING/MONTANA

From the Sonoran Desert to the Rocky Mountains, this geological field trip of a drive from Flagstaff, Arizona, to the Canadian border traverses cactus-filled desert, a volcanic plateau with lava flows, the red rocks of Sedona, and the Great Salt Lake.

PLANNING: Visit the route's national parks, including Yellowstone, untraveled road.com

2 E4. NORWAY

Starting in southern Norway and driving as far north as you can is an excellent way of testing both you and your car's endurance. This rugged 1,499-mile (2,412 km) road leads from Haugesund on the west coast, Norway's oldest settlement, into the Artic Circle, ending up at the bleak headland of Nordkapp, one of the most northerly points in Europe. Visual highlights along the way include fjords, forests, fishing villages, glaciers, mountains, and tundra, as well as the northern lights. Expect little traffic, but watch out for roaming reindeer.

PLANNING: Allow 36 hours for the drive In summer expect continual daylight.

3 RUTA 40, ARGENTINA

Ruta 40 stretches along the whole country from Cabo Virgenes in the south to La Quiaca in the north, extending more than 3045 miles (4,900 km). It crosses 256 bridges and many rivers, lakes, national parks, and mountain passes. From sea level, it ascends dramatically to 16,404 feet (5,000 m) in the north around Salta.

PLANNING: Ruta 40 is largely paved, but the southern part crosses mostly barren terrain. turismoruta40.com.ar.en

4 NÜRBURGRING, NÜRBURG, GERMANY

Designed to flaunt Germany's automotive provess, the original mountain ring track emerged between 1925 and 1927 for the country's first Grand Prix. A new track was completed in 1984, but the original 129-mile (20.8 km) Nordschleife (Northern Loop) regularly opens to the public as a toll road. This is probably the world's most challenging purpose-built racetrack.

10

DRIVERS' DRIVES

From the adrenaline rush of a Formula One track to the sedate pleasures of a quiet Norwegian highway, here's our choice of roads that are fun to drive.

PLANNING: Check opening times. There's no speed limit but German driving laws apply; unli censed racing is banned. nuerburgring.de

5 DAVOS TO STELVIO VIA BORMIO, SWITZERLAND/ITALY

Implausibly etched through the peaks of the eastern Alps, this dizzying zigzag road built in the early 19th century is a hardcore workout for even the very best of drivers and automobiles. The 60 hairpin turns bring you up the mountains to a height of 9,042 feet (2,756 m).

PLANNING: The road often closes in winter. Bormio offers year-round skiing. davos.ch

6 JABEL HAFIT MOUNTAIN ROAD, ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Sixty bends lead through a dramatic sandstone moonscape to the 4,098-foot (1,249 m) summit of Abu Dhabi's highest mountain. This is no rough mountain track, but a state-of-the-art highway where drivers like to "exercise" their expensive racing cars on its twists and turns.

PLANNING: Go in late afternoon to enjoy the sunset from the summit. *visitabudhabi.ae*

7 MOUNT PELION, GREECE

Begin this tortuous, stunning drive in Volos, twisting up Pelion's slopes to the village of

OPPOSITE: The canyon of Las Flechas carries Ruta 40 through one of the most arid and inhospitable parts of Argentina. Makrinitsa, its 18th-century homes hanging from the green mountainside. Passing slate-nofed villages, ancient churches, and fruit orchards, head over the mountain to the peninsula's east coast, where narrow lanes lead to beach towns, including Agios loannis. Return to Volos via Millies.

PLANNING: June is the best month to go: warm

8 SNAEFELL ROAD, ISLE OF MAN

The Isle of Man has been a leading motorsport destination since 1904, when racing was legalized on public roads. The 15-mile (25 km) A18 road between Douglas and Ramsey is the motorcycle-race circuit used for the Isle of Man T and the Manx Grand Prix. The Isle of Man is one of the few British territories with no national speed limit, a key attraction for many.

PLANNING: The TT runs from late May to mid-June; the Manx Grand Prix starts in late August. Both last 14 days. gov.im

9 ROUTE DES CRÊTES, FRANCE

Teetering on cliffs high above the Mediterranean—certainly not for the faint-hearted—this 12-mile (19 km) drive between the pastel-painted fishing village of Cassis and the coastal city of La Ciotat heads over the Cap Canaille, at 1,300 feet (396 m) Europe's highest maritime cliff. From roadside viewpoints peer down into the gorgeous turquoise inlets that line the coast from here to Marseille.

PLANNING: Cassis has beautiful beaches, and there are plenty of places to stay—Les Roches Blanches is a popular hotel with amazing views. ot-cassis.com, beyond.fr

10 ER101 ANTIGA, MADEIRA, PORTUGAL

On Madeira's wildly beautiful north coast, head west from São Jorge along the Antiga, the old road, blasted into cliff and mountainside. Go carefully along the twisting stretch between Boaventura and Ponta Delgado where the road narrows scarily and precipices plunge sheer on the seaward side. Catch your breath in beachside São Vicente, then continue west toward Porto Moniz.

PLANNING: Heavy rain can bring landslides madeiraguide.co.uk/coastroad.shtml



Northeast from Lana'i City, steep-sided, stream-cut Maunalei Gulch runs to the ocean.

| HAWAII |

HAWAIIAN HIGH ROAD

Lâna'i offers one of the more intriguing drives in the Hawaiian isles, a route that crawls up and over the island's volcanic highlands on a combination of paved and rust-colored dirt roads to a super-secluded beach on the north shore.

he Aloha State lends itself to some pretty good drives, including a tour across Lâna'i that highlight's the island's human and natural history. A 4WD is a must for the rugged, unpawed latter half of the trip. Local rental agencies offer Jeeps that visitors can fetch on arrival at the Manele Harbor ferry pier at the start of their trans-Lâna'i drive. Just beyond the harbor is Hulopo'e Beach Park, where a golden-sand strand begs a quick dip. Offshore is Sweetheart Rock (Puu Pehe), a sea stack named for an ancient legend about star-crossed lovers. Manele Road (Route 440) climbs from the shoreline to the lofty Pâlàwai Basin, which sprawls across the heart of Lâna'i. Lined with towering Cook Island pines, the road makes its way across an area where 75% of the world's pineapples were once grown, to Lâna'i City. With its laidback lifestyle and vintage architecture, the onetime Dole company town is a time-trip back to bygone Hawaii. Dole Park in the town center is flanked by cafés, churches, and the Lâna'i Culture & Heritage Center, where a small museum spins tales of the pineapple era. East of town, the Munro Trail offers a hiking and biking path through the often-misty forest. However, the road trip continues to the north along a series of unpaved roads—Kanepuu Highway, Awalua Highway, and Polihua Road—that transitions from loose gravel to washboard-riddled dirt. It takes about 45 minutes to reach Keahiakawelo, an assembly of giant boulders also called the Garden of the Gods. From the lofty, windswept perch you can look out across the water to Moloka'i and Oahu. From there it's another half hour downhill to remote Polihua Beach, a 2-mile (3 km) stretch of sand that feels like you've reached

In 1854, less than a decade after founding Salt Lake City, Mormon missionaries established a small colony on Lian 1. The local Hawaiian chief leased them what was then considered useless land—the Páláwa Basin in the lighlands. The Mormons tried sheep ranching and sugar cane farming before discovering that a spiky fruit called the pineapple thrived in the rich volcanic soil.

FROM: Manele Harbor, Hawaii
TO: Polihua Beach, Hawaii
ROADS: State Highway 440,
Kanepuu Hwy., Awalua Hwy.,
Polihua Rd., Polihua Trail
DISTANCE: 20 miles (32 km)
DRIVING TIME: 15 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Lâna'i boasts just
two hotels—the posh Four
Seasons and the historic Hotel
Lāna'i—so book early if you're
staying overnight.



32 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

MAYA RUINS AND WATERFALLS

This route through the Chiapas highlands of southern Mexico, which includes a section of the Pan-American Highway, climbs from tropical jungle, pleasant rolling hills, and tranquil valleys into the evergreen mountains around San Cristóbal de las Casas.

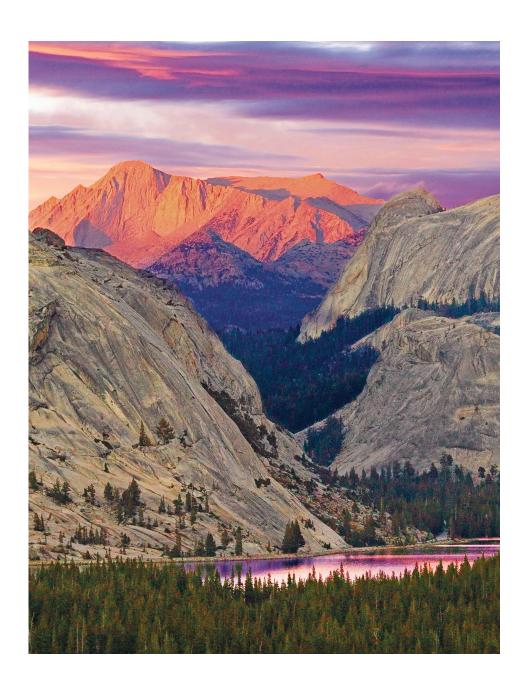
fter visiting the ruined Maya city of Palenque, head south along Hwy. 199, stopping at the spectacular 130-foot (40 m) Misol-Ha waterfall, most impressive after late summer and fall rains, and with a cave leading to a subterranean pool. After about 25 miles (40 km), take the $dirt\, road\, sign posted\, to\, the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, river\, plunges\, through\, a\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, the\, rocky\, gorge\, over\, hundred for the\, falls\, of\, Agua\, Azul,\, where\, fall$ $dreds\ of\ frothy\ falls,\ surrounded\ by\ exuberant\ vegetation.\ You\ can\ hike\ along\ the\ gorge\ to\ bathe\ in\ the$ pools or climb up to a viewpoint above them. Back on the road, Hwy. 199 curves and climbs past fields and farms into the refreshing climate of Ocosingo Valley. At the town of Ocosingo, you can take a 6-mile (10 km) detour to the Maya ruins of Toniná, home to one of the tallest pyramids in the Maya world, standing 230 feet (70 m) above the ancient Grand Plaza. Back on Hwy. 199, turn northwest onto Hwy. 190, the Pan-American Highway, and head west past cattle ranches, farms, and coffee plantations until you reach the city of San Cristóbal de las Casas, with its brightly colored homes, old churches, and architecture with strong Maya influences. Backtrack southeast on Hwy. 190, and after 22 miles (35 km), look for the pottery-making Tzeital village of Amatenango del Valle on the right. Another 25 miles (40 $\,$ km) southeast brings you to the small city of Comitán de Domínguez, full of narrow streets with pretty colonial architecture. Six miles (10 km) beyond Comitán are the ruins of Tenam Puente, once a major $May a city. Another 8\,miles (13\,km)\,down\,Hwy.\,190, go\,east along\,a\,road\,marked\,"Lagunas\,de\,Montebello"$ $for \ 3\ miles\ (5\ km)\ to\ reach\ the\ Maya\ ruins\ of\ Chinkultic.\ Built\ on\ top\ of\ a\ bluff,\ this\ ruined\ city\ has\ step$ pyramids and 200 smaller buildings and is famous for its views of the surrounding terrain. Parque Nacional Lagunas de Montebello, with its intensely colored lakes and peaceful atmosphere, marks the



FROM: Palenque, Mexico
To: Parque Nacional Lagunas de
Montebello, Mexico
ROADS: Hwys. 199, 190
DISTANCE: 200 miles (322 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 days
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING:
visitmexico.com

At Agua Azul, crystal-clear water cascades over layers of travertine that have built up to create a network of falls





| CALIFORNIA |

YOSEMITE'S TIOGA ROAD

 $Stretching\ across\ the\ heart\ of\ Yosemite\ National\ Park,\ Tioga\ Road\ meanders\ through\ California's$ $Sierra\ Nevada\ range\ to\ the\ High\ Desert\ on\ the\ far\ side.\ Along\ the\ way\ are\ giant\ sequoias\ and\ glacial$ $lakes, flower-filled\ meadows, and\ snowcapped\ peaks,\ as\ well\ as\ trailheads\ for\ legendary\ hiking\ routes.$



Unicorn Creek, in Tuolumne Meadows, is a good spot to look for deer early and late in the day

semite's scenic Tioga Road was born as a Native American trade and migration route across the High Sierra and a wagon road from California's Central Valley to the silver mines around Tioga Pass. It wasn't until after World War I—when it was widened and paved—that it morphed into one of the most scenic roads in America.

Although drivers can start from either end, this drive begins at the Yosemite Valley end, where the Tioga Road joins Crane Flat with its gas station and general store. Five minutes along is the first stop: the Tuolumne Grove of big trees. Located down a 1-mile (1.6 km) path, the stand harbors several dozen giant sequoias. The next stretch of Tioga Road offers several intriguing side trips. Tamarack Flat is the $jumping-off spot for strenuous \ hikes to the top of El Capitan, the holy grail of global \ rock climbing, while$ White Wolf offers both a campground and a historic whitewashed lodge opened in 1926.

Farther along Tioga Road, Olmstead Point provides one of the park's most famous viewpoints, a panorama that sweeps across Clouds Rest, Tenaya Canyon, and the backside of Half Dome. Just down the hill is Tenaya Lake, one of the highest (8,150 feet/2,484 m) and largest lakes in the High Sierra. Leaving the car behind, picnic on one of the lake's sandy beaches before resuming the drive.

After Yosemite Valley, Tuolumne Meadows (see Highlights) offers a lodge, campground, restaurant, store, and even a post office. From the meadow, trekkers can set off along two popular $routes: the John \, Muir \, Trail \, (JMT) \, to \, Yosemite \, Valley \, and \, the \, Pacific \, Crest \, Trail \, (PCT), \, which \, runs \, An extra \, (PCT) \, and \, Crest \, Trail \, Cr$ all the way from Canada to Mexico. The final stretch of tarmac through the national park climbs to Tioga Pass, the road's namesake and hub of a brief but frenzied silver-mining boom in the 1880s. $Turnoffs offer trailheads to lovely Dana Meadow and a steep hike up Mount Dana \ (13,057 feet/$ 3,980 m) on the Sierra's lofty alpine crest. From Tioga Pass it's all downhill, a steep descent to Lee Vining and Mono Lake (see Highlights) with its oddball tufa limestone formations in the High Desert. Although it's only 12 miles (20 km), the stretch of Tioga Road between the national park boundary and the Highway 395 junction offers an incredibly quick transition from sierra subalpine forest to the arid landscape of the Great Basin.

OPPOSITE: Mountains of granite are reflected in the still waters of Tenaya Lake.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Tenaya Lake offers plenty of scope for fishing, swimming, or boating in nonmotorized craft, as well as a hiking trail around the lake and rock climbing on nearby granite domes.

One of the largest of its kind in the One of the largest of its kind in the Sierra, **Tuolumne Meadows** is a great place to spot wildlife at dusk or dawn when many of the animals come out to feed.

Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center near Lee Vining has the lowdown on naturalist-led walks and talks and guided canoe/kayak trips on the oddball lake.

FROM: Crane Flat, California To: Lee Vining, California ROAD: Calif. 120, 49, 88, 89, 395 DISTANCE: 61 miles (99 km) **DRIVING TIME: 1.5 hours** WHEN TO GO: Late May or June through November PLANNING: Break the drive into multiple days by overnighting at Tuolumne Meadows or White Wolfe lodges, or any of five campgrounds. nps.gov/yose



ESCAMBRAY MOUNTAIN ROADS

The elevated roads of this circular route in the Escambray Mountains, with perfect views of the Caribbean Sea and some of Cuba's most pristine mountain scenery, are often virtually deserted—letting you savor the delights of the Cuban countryside in peace and quiet.

he Circuito Sur coast road leaves the remarkably unspoiled colonial city of Trinidad along Calle Pino Guinart. Drive west, and after 3 miles (5 km) follow the sign for the spa resort of Topes de $Collantes, driving \ north \ across \ the \ dips \ and \ troughs \ of \ the \ R\'io \ Ca\~nas \ Valley. \ You \ soon \ ascend$ a steeply curving road into the lushly forested Sierra del Escambray before arriving at Topes de Collantes (see Stav a While). Two miles (3 km) north of the resort, bear right at the Y-junction. For the next few miles, you drive through pine and eucalyptus forest with breathtaking views of rising mountains to the west and Valle de Caburní to the east. After a short drive, the road corkscrews down the mountains past rows of coffee bushes to the village of Jibacoa. Soon the descent eases and the northern views open up, revealing bohios (thatched huts), royal palms, and ox-tilled fields. Ten miles (16 km) beyond Jibacoa, in the center of Manicaragua, turn left onto Rte. 4-206, and 3 miles (5 km) $beyond the small community of Ciro \, Redondo, turn \, left \, again for views \, of the \, pea-green \, lake \, at \, Embalse-dondor \, and \, community \, of \, Ciro \, Redondo, turn \, left \, again \, for \, views \, of \, the \, pea-green \, lake \, at \, Embalse-dondor \, community \, of \, Ciro \, Redondo, \, turn \, left \, again \, for \, views \, of \, the \, pea-green \, lake \, at \, Embalse-dondor \, community \, of \, Ciro \, Redondo, \, turn \, left \, again \, for \, views \, of \, the \, pea-green \, lake \, at \, Embalse-dondor \, community \, of \, Ciro \, Redondo, \, turn \, left \, again \, for \, views \, of \, the \, pea-green \, lake \, at \, Embalse-dondor \, community \, of \, Ciro \, Redondo, \, turn \, left \, again \, for \, views \, of \, the \, pea-green \, lake \, at \, Embalse-dondor \, community \, of \, Ciro \, Redondor \, community \, communi$ Hanabanilla. Return to the main highway and head west through orange groves to Cumanayagua, turning south at the western end of town. Once beyond Los Cedros, you see the Circuito Sur again—turnleft onto it. The landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes abruptly as orange groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands. After the landscape changes groves give way to cattle-grazed grasslands grant gr $about 10\,minutes, the\,road\,touches\,the\,Caribbean\,coast\,at\,the\,mouth\,of\,the\,R\'{i}o\,La\,Jut\'{i}a.\,A\,little\,farther\,about\,$ on is Hacienda La Vega, a cattle ranch where you can go horseback riding. The mountains crowd down to the shore as you drive east from here across rivers and deep ravines. Beyond the Río Cabagán, you enter Sancti Spíritus province and power up the hill back to Trinidad.

I STAY A WHILE I Topes de Collantes is the name of a resort and a nature reserve in the Escambray Mountains. Hike one of the short trails in the park to explore tropical rainforest filled with bannan trees, begonia, jasmine, ginger, West Indian mahogany, and several species of orchick and ferms. You can also see the park's underground river systems, coffee plantations, and waterfalls, and visit the massive 210-room Kurhotel, built in 1954, with its excellent art collection.



FROM: Loop route from Trinidad, Cuba ROADs: Circuito Sur, Rte. 4-206, local roads DISTANCE: 96 miles (154 km) DRIVING TIME: 5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: gocuba.ca

The Crocodile House in Trinidad, dating from the 18th century, is a former industrialist's residence





The waterfall of Chorro de Doña Juana plunges into a clear pool, where locals go to swim.

PUERTO RICO

THE PANORAMIC ROUTE

Zigzagging through some of the most exquisite scenery in Puerto Rico, the Panoramic Route is an extremely narrow road traversing the length of the island from east to west, with endless views of sea and mountains.

rom the unspoiled colonial coastal town of Maunabo, Rte, 3 heads inland to Yabucoa, crosses the Río Guayanés, and climbs into the Puerto Rican foothills. Running along a ridge dotted with small $settlements\ and\ valleys\ filled\ with\ banana\ trees, firs, and\ bamboo\ on\ either\ side\ for\ about\ 6\ miles$ (10 km), the road then begins to climb steeply as small coffee plantations replace the lowland cattle ranches. Rte. 3 next enters the rainforest of the Carite State Forest, home to 50 species of birds, several waterfalls, and a blue pool known as the Charco Azul. Views of sea and coastal plains soon open up to the south. Continue along the ridgebacks of the Sierra de Cayey and up to the observation tower at the $summit of \ Piedra \ Degetau \ for \ great \ views. \ The \ once \ grandiose \ town \ of \ Aibonito, \ the \ highest \ town \ in$ Puerto Rico and a former retreat of the wealthy, is just to the north of the main road. Beyond Aibonito is the Cañon San Cristóbal, a deep gorge with a waterfall plunging 700 feet (213 m) to the Río Usabón below. Return to Rte. 3, which twists along the spine of the Cordillera Central, giving wonderful views of the whole island and the shimmering Caribbean. Beyond Cerro El Malo, you enter the Toro Negro State Forest, where a canopy of leafy bamboo shades the road. Six miles (10 km) to the northeast is the Área de Recreo Doña Juana, where you can take a short walk to a huge natural swimming pool in the forest. Beyond the pool, the path heads gently up Cerro Doña Juana, where a small tower has views of the mountains and coastline. The main road descends to the quiet town of Adjuntas before climbing once again through the Cordillera Central, skirting the towering Montañas de Uroyan to reach Mayagüez on the west coast.

EXCURSION I Just south of Mayagüez lies Cabo Rojo, one of Puerto Ricc's most popular towns. The local beaches have been dubbed the most scenic on the island, especially Playa Sucia, a slightly rustic yet charming sandy beach with fabulous sunsets. The town's Los Morrillos Lighthouse, built in 1882, is is itsued on top of 200-00x (60 m) high white-lime cliffs and has some of the island's best views. Cabo Rojo is also known for its fresh fish and seafood restaurants.

FROM: Maunabo, Puerto Rico
TO: Mayagüez, Puerto Rico
ROADs: Road numbers change
constantly. The route is marked
with brown R.U.T.A. signs, but
not at all junctions.
DISTANCE: 120 miles (193 km)

DRIVING TIME: At least 1 day
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Mountain inns along
the route provide places to stay.
topuertorico.org





A male quetzal bird on Cerro de la Muerte—the Mountain of Death—shows off its colors.

COSTA PICA

QUETZAL COUNTRY

Soaring across some of the highest mountains accessible by road in Costa Rica, through the haunt of the rare resplendent quetzal bird, this section of the Pan-American Highway links the valleys of the Meseta Central and El General, offering spectacular views.

he delightful old colonial city of Cartago is home to the ornate 19th-century Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Los Ángeles and many other historic buildings. Two miles (3 km) south of the city, Hwy. 2 begins to climb, rising to the village of Vara de Roble before falling to Santa María de Dota. The views become ever more impressive as you ascend to Empalme village, your last gas-stop. $Here \,the \,road\,is\,flanked\,by\,or chards, pastures, and\,slopes\,forested\,with\,pines\,and\,oaks.\,Road side\,trout$ farms offer fishing and horseback rides. Continue to the vellow church of Cañón (at the Km 58 marker). which sits on the crest of the Continental Divide, a perfect spot to admire the views. Settlements begin to thin from here as you continue up through the Río Macho Forest Reserve, which protects 500-year- $\,$ old cipresillo oaks and aguacatillos (avocados), a favorite food for quetzals. Soon you reach a refuge hut once used by traders before a mountain road existed and now a tiny museum. At Km 80, take a right turn onto a side road that spirals westward to the valley of the Río Savegre. The rocky roadway plunges $2,\!100\,feet\,(640\,m)\,in\,5.5\,miles\,(9\,km), ending\,at\,the\,valley\,hamlet\,of\,San\,Gerardo\,de\,Dota\,(see\,Highlights),$ with its trout-filled streams, orchards, and the (occasional) strikingly colored quetzal. Back on the main highway, continue south to Km 85. Here you can take a short path (by 4WD) to the 11,450-foot (3,490 m) summit of Cerro de la Muerte—the Mountain of Death, named for the many farmworkers $road\ continues\ to\ twist\ and\ turn,\ before\ passing\ the\ settlement\ of\ Siberia\ and\ descending\ steeply\ into\ the$ the Valle de El General.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

At the Km 70 marker, a detour takes you to **Mirador de Quetzales** (also known as Fines Eddie Serrano), set a mild forest-clad mountains, this simple hotel is a superb location for spotting quetzals and exotic hummingbirds. Members of the Serrano family will guide you along the forest trails.

The Dantica Cloud Forest Lodge and Gallery, near San Gerardo de Dota, shows Latin American art from contemporary and indigenous artists, and is a great starting point for hiking into the Parque Nacional Los Quetzales.

The Savegre Biosphere Reserve in San Gerardo de Dota is another excellent place to find out about the elusive resplendent quetzal bird.

FROM: Cartago, Costa Rica
TO: Siberia, Costa Rica
ROAD: Hwy. 2
DISTANCE: 45 miles (72 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Avoid the rainy
season (May-November)
PLANNING: Costarica.com



38 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

PLAZAS AND PINES IN PANAMA

The breathtaking scenery along this drive through the foothills of the Cordillera Centra has been described as a series of natural film sets unfolding before you, as green-clad mountains, their peaks often shrouded in cloud, dot the landscape.

fter admiring Penonomé's charming colonial main plaza (see Stay a While), set off along the road leading from the plaza's northwest corner and drive through the valley of the Río Coclé, encircled by gracefully rounded peaks in the distance. La Pintada, 9 miles (14 km) on, is a pretty agricultural town with a gleaming white church—Iglesia de Candelaria—that gives it added beauty. A small road runs east from the church to Charco Las Lavanderas, whose natural swimming pools are said to $have \ healing \ powers. \ From \ La\ Pintada\ continue\ northeast\ toward\ Las\ Minas, following\ the\ partially$ $paved\ road\ as\ it\ drills\ into\ ever\ more\ rugged\ terrain.\ Ascending\ eastward,\ you\ can\ enjoy\ a\ spectacular$ view to the west of the Cerro Orarí, a flat-topped, sheer-walled mesa. The next few miles provide stun $ning\ vistas\ of\ a\ series\ of\ forest-draped\ valleys\ and\ mountains.\ In\ the\ community\ of\ Toabr\'e,\ turn\ left\ at$ $the \, cross roads \, for \, Tambo-a \, small \, village \, flanked \, by \, citrus \, groves. \, Turn \, right \, at \, the \, church \, in \, Tambo,$ soon passing a charming cemetery against a backdrop of mountain ridges. The Cerro Chichibalí, a volcanic rock tower, dominates the scene, towering over the nearby community of Miraflores, whose church is enfolded by pines. The road continues through conifer forest and past cattle ranches, with $views \, opening \, up \, of \, valleys \, studded \, with \, spectacular \, limestone \, formations. \, At \, the \, junction \, in \, the \, small \, in \, the$ town of Churuquita Grande, take the left turn to Caimito, a village graced by the charming little chapel of Capilla Católica de la Medalla Milagrosa. For the next few miles the ridge road delivers breathtaking views, as the road narrows and steepens, before arriving at Villa Tavida Lodge & Spa.

I STAY A WHILE I The agricultural town of **Penonomé** is known for its sombreros pintados (straw hats) and a striking colonial plaza, the Parque 8 de Diclembre. Shaded with flametrees and centered around a bandstand, the plaza has beautifu buildings, such as the Iglesia San Juan Bautista, and a handsome meierieval-style policy estation. The Auseo de Penonomé, situated in four blue-and-white 18th-century cottages, has history exhibits, pre-Columbian ceramics, and colonial religious icons.

FROM: Penonomé, Panama To: Villa Tavida Lodge & Spa, Panama ROADS: There are no road numbers, but most intersections are signed. DISTANCE: 41 miles (66 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round

PLANNING: visitpanama.com

Churuquita Granda holds its Feria de la Narania (Oranga Festival) at the end of January each yea





The ancient, hand-carved rice fields of Banaue extend up the lower slopes of the Cordillera Mountains, occupying every available patch of land.

PHILIPPINES

TERRACES OF THE CORDILLERA

The Halsema Highway clings to the mountainsides as it climbs past farms and rice terraces into the Cordillera Mountains, in the northern Luzon region, to reach the highest point in the Philippines' highway system.

ggin in sprawling Baguio City, and head north on Magsaysay Avenue to La Trinidad, 2 miles (3 km) to the north. Catch glimpses of the town's hundreds of strawberry fields before turning right onto La Trinidad Avenue at the Benguet Provincial Capitol building to reach the Halsema Highway. At first, the highway follows the path of lumber vehicles, which now bring in vegetables from farms that sprang up in the old forest. Plenty of trees remain, however, as the road begins its mountain ascent and you get your first view of bright green, terraced rice fields stepping down the mountainsides. The road continues uphill past Sayangan Town to 7,200-foot (2,195 m) Highest Point and then winds downhill past spectacular high ridges and rocky cliffs. The highway enters Mountain Province around 55 miles (40 km) from Sayangan, clinging to the mountainsides as it descends through low valleys of rice farms to the Chico River at Sabangan Town. The river and highway travel together to the provincial capital, Bontoc—don't miss the colorful locally made fabrics at the Pasalubong Center. Head south across the Chico River bridge to the town of Samoki to reach Mount Polis and Banaue, where you can see the area's most spectacular terraced farms (see In Focus).

IN FOCUS The stone-walled Banaue rice terraces, one of the world's most awe-inspiring sites, were created around 2,000 years ago and extend thousands of feet up into the mountains. They are irrigated by natural springs and streams that have been channeled into small canals running downlill. It is thought the terraces were built, mainly by hand, by the descendants of Chinese immigrants who fled the mainland around 2100 ac.

FROM: Baguio City, Philippines TO: Banaue, Philippines ROADS: Magsaysay Avenue, La Trinidad Avenue, Halsema Highway, Icoal roads DISTANCE: 80 miles (130 km) DRIVING TIME: 5 hours WHEN TO 60: Avoid the rainy season (June through October) PLANNING: heirloomrice.com



IROHAZAKA WINDING ROAD

Japan's most spectacular drive is about as twisted as it gets, a vertiginous route with numerous switchbacks and hairpin turns along the way. Waterfalls, hot-spring resorts, wilderness hiking trails, and a gorgeous lakeshore await those who make the climb.

nce a pilgrimage trail for Buddhist monks, the sinuous route features 48 hairpin turns, each named for a phonetic syllable from an ancient Japanese alphabet. The route comprises two one-way roads—one going up and the other going down. The zigzagging portion with all those switchbacks is just 10 miles (16 km) total distance but it's normally done as part of a day-long road trip into the Oku-Nikko highlands. Don't set off before exploring Nikko on foot. Often acclaimed as the zenith of Japanese spiritual architecture, the highland town is spangled with elaborate decorated temples, gateways, and shrines to long-ago shoguns tucked beneath 400-year-old cedar trees.

From the celebrated Shin-kyo (Sacred Bridge) in Nikko, it's about a 10-minute drive along the Daiya River to the base of the Irohazaka Winding Road. Two-thirds of the way up is the parking lot for Akechidaira Ropeway, a cable car that ascends to an observation deck with panoramic views of Kegon Falls, Lake Chuzenji, and the mountains beyond. Chuzenji town and the lakeshore are just a few minutes farther up the road. The waterfront is lined with restaurants, boutique hotels, and summer villas built in the early 20th century to escape Tokyo's searing heat. Road-trippers can drive another steep road to the summit of Mount Hanestewayma for an incredible vista, or leave the car behind for a lake cruise.

The main road (Route 120) runs along the lake's north shore into the wilds of Nikko National Park to Ryuzu Falls and the onsen hot-spring resort in Yumoto village. There are numerous footpaths in the area, including a boardwalk trail through the Senjogahara wetlands. Heading back to Nikko, the downhill portion of the Irohazaka Winding Road passes 318-foot (97 m) Kegon Falls, where an elevator whisks visitors to the bottom of the gorge for a close-up view of the awesome cascade. There's one last stop on the way back into town: Nikko Botanical Gardens, with 2,200 species of trees, flowers, and shrubs, most of them indigenous to Japan.

FROM: Nikko, Japan TO: Yumoto, Japan ROAD: National routes 120 and 122 DISTANCE: 36 miles (58 km)

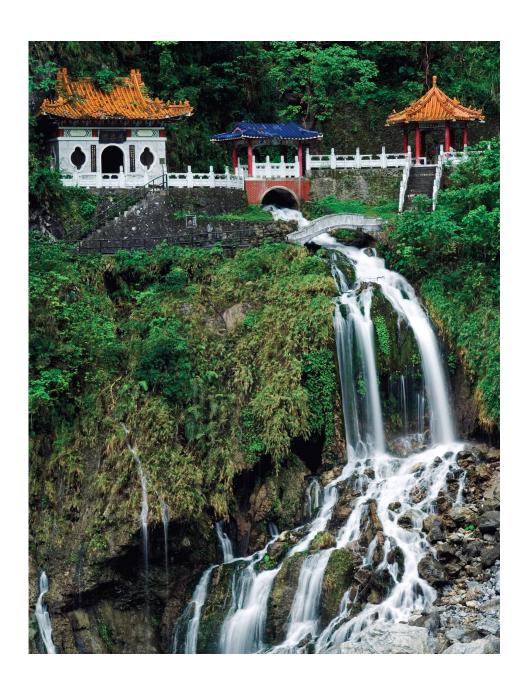
DRIVING TIME: 1.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Schedule the drive
for September or October when
the winding road, lakeshore,
and Nikko National Park are
enveloped in fall colors.

nikko-travel.jp/english



Admire red-hatted Jizo statues at the Kanmangafuchi World Heritage site near Nikko.





DRIVING TAROKO GORGE

 $Following\ the\ twisting\ and\ turning\ lip\ of\ Taroko\ Gorge, famous\ for\ its\ sheer\ marble\ cliffs$ $and\ deep\ gorges,\ this\ route\ show cases\ spectacular\ scenery\ and\ intriguing\ rock\ against\ the$ $backdrop\ of\ the\ Central\ Mountain\ Range\ in\ secluded\ eastern\ Taiwan.$



Bridges and trails along the Taroko Gorge lead deep into Taroko National Park

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Swallow Grotto is a pedestrianized section of the original road where traffic has been rerouted to allow visitors to enjoy the view. The lower marble sections on the opposite cliff are pockmarked with hundreds of small grottoes created by underground streams long dried-up. Swallows are common here, especially in spring and summer.

The Tunnel of Nine Turns is a series The Tunnel of Nine Turns is a series of short tunnels excavated through the marble cliffs, with tiered waterfalls cascading down to the Liwu River. The far end of the tunnel opens onto extensive vistas, providing a sense of the gorge's true size.

he pristine blue waters of Taiwan's Liwu River have taken millennia to cut through marble cliffs to create this magical deep-sided gorge, now the centerpiece of Taroko National Park. The drive $begins \, at \, the \, park's \, head quarters, south \, of \, the \, small \, city \, of \, Hualien. \, Just \, 1.4 \, miles \, (2.2 \, km) \, from \, miles$ $the \, start, follow \, signposts \, to \, the \, Eternal \, Spring \, (Changchun) \, Shrine. \, Set \, above \, the \, multiple \, streams \, of \, changchun) \, Shrine \, start, follow \, signposts \, to \, the \, Eternal \, Spring \, (Changchun) \, Shrine \, start, follow \, signposts \, to \, the \, Eternal \, Spring \, (Changchun) \, Shrine \, start, follow \, signposts \, to \, the \, Eternal \, Spring \, (Changchun) \, Shrine \, start, follow \, signposts \, to \, the \, Eternal \, Spring \, (Changchun) \, Shrine \, start, follow \, signposts \, start, follow \,$ a 45-foot (14 m) waterfall weaving down the cliffside, the shrine commemorates the 212 workers who died constructing the road. A steep trail with awe-inspiring views of the Central Mountain Range leads into the mountains from here. From the shrine, the road climbs alongside the gorge's steep walls for $5\ miles$ (8 km) to a turnoff to Buluowan Recreation Area. From here, a steep, short road takes you to a local Ataval community. Set in the foothills and encircled by mountains on three sides, the village's setting is spectacular, and you can see elderly Atayal demonstrating their traditional weaving.

Continue west on the main road for 2.5 miles (4 km) to Swallow Grotto (see Highlights), where the road originally went through a long tunnel blasted through the cliffs. A new road bypasses the tunnel so that people can now walk through and enjoy the dramatic scenery at a leisurely pace. At Jinheng Bridge, across the Liwu River, you are greeted on the north bank by the brooding Yindianren, or Indian Head Rock, a huge monolith that has been weathered into the shape of a Native American chief's head and is one of the park's most famous sites. The twisting, pedestrian-only Tunnel of Nine Turns awaits a couple of miles (3.2 km) on (see Highlights). From the viewpoint at Lioufang Bridge, just before the tunnel, you get a good view of the way in which the tunnel was blasted through the mountains. Cross the Bridge of Motherly Devotion, 1.25 miles (2 km) beyond the tunnel, where the riverbed is scattered with huge boulders, and head toward the resort of Tiansiang. Just before you reach the town, a suspension bridge leads across the river to a six-story pagoda perched on a mountain ridge with outstanding views from the top. The pagoda is part of the Xiangde Temple complex. Tiansiang, on the edge of the gorge, is Taroko's largest settlement.

OPPOSITE: Pay your respects at the Eternal Spring (Changchun) Shrine, set above a powerful waterfall.

FROM: Taroko National Park Headquarters, Taiwan To: Tiansiang (Tianxiang), ROAD: Hwy. 8/Central Cross-Island Highway

DISTANCE: 11.4 miles (19 km) **DRIVING TIME: 40 minutes** WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: The park is closed on the second Monday of each month. Traffic along the gorge is very heavy on weekends and holidays. www.taroko.gov.tw





The buildings of the Tatra Mountains are often constructed in the unique Zakopane style, as seen in this wooden farmhouse.

POLAND | SLOVAKIA |

TATRA MOUNTAINS

Drive through peaceful rural villages and spa towns, forested valleys, rolling pastoral countryside, and beautiful rocky mountains on this tour through Poland's and Slovakia's Tatra National Parks, linking the gateway towns of Zakopane and Starý Smokovec.

oland's skiing capital, Zakopane, originally developed as a mountain health resort, where people flocked to benefit from the mountain air and inspiring vistas. From here, follow Rte. 47 (Ulica Kasprowicza) northeast to the traditional village of Poronin. Cross the bridge and at the first roundabout turn left onto Rte. 961, which loops under the road you have just driven along. Almost immediately, turn right toward Bukowina Tatrzańska. Settlements begin to thin out, with many buildings in the distinctive local style characterized by high wooden roofs. Just before Bukowina Tatrzańska, the region's highest village, turn right along Rte. 960. The narrow road climbs steadily through forest, then descends from Glodówka, steeply in places, to Łysa Polana, a small mountain village. Bear left to cross the border into Slovakia and continue along Rte. 66.

The road slices through a narrow valley then turns right to the village of Tatranská Javorina, clustered around a tight bend in the road. Continue, mostly through forest, to the hamlet of Podspády. Turn right to stay on Rte. 66, which soon descends into open countryside and the skiing village of Zdiar, where a small museum explains the local culture. Next comes a forested valley and, beyond, the small mountain village of Tatranská Kotlina. The large institutional building here is a former sanatorium, where you can enjoy some first-class rest, and you can also visit Belianska Cave, with its spectacular stalagmites. Just beyond Tatranská Kotlina, turn right along Rte. 537. The views of the rugged Tatra peaks, dominated by 8,635-foot (2,632 m) Lomnicky Štit, are very impressive. Pass through Tatranské Matliare, another sanatorium village, and you soon reach Tatranská Lomnica, originally a 19th-century spa town. Continue along Rte. 537 to your final destination, the spa town of Starý Smokovec.

FROM: Zakopane, Poland
To: Stary Smokovec, Slovakia
Roads: Rtes. 47, 961, 960, 66, 537
DISTANCE: 38 miles (60 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1.25 hours
WHEN TO 60: Spring through fall
PLANNING: You will need your
passport. zakopane-life.com



CZECH REPUBLIC

THE "SWISS" CZECH REPUBLIC

When visiting in the 1770s, Swiss Romantic artists, with literary flair and a poet's prejudice, described the delightful region as the "Czech Switzerland," since its steep hills, wooded valleys, and well-kept villages reminded them of home.

he pretty village of Hřensko, filled with half-timbered German-style cottages, sits in a gorge edged by overhanging rocks where it joins the Labe Valley. The nearby Pravčická brána, a natural bridge measuring some 85 feet (26 m) across and 68 feet $(21 \mathrm{\ m})$ high, is the area's most stunning attraction. The only way to reach it is by walking through the woods from Hřensko or Mezní Louka. From Hřensko, head east on a local road to Mezní Louka, where a path leads to another stone bridge, the Malá Pravčická brána, and on to the hamlet of Mezná. This tranquil place, perched on a grassy slope above the forested Kamenice Gorge, is quiet even in summer and has a handful of rustic guesthouses and restaurants. Rejoin the main road east to the town of Jetřichovice, a small village where old farmhouses have been converted into simple guesthouses. Continue southward to Česká Kamenice, which has a fine baroque chapel. Three miles (5 km) to the east is the rock formation of Panksá skála, where thousands of basalt columns resemble organ pipes. From Česká Kamenice, continue toward Děčín via Benešov nad Ploučnicí with its two $16 th-century \ castles. \ The \ higher of \ the \ two \ has \ changing \ art \ exhibitions, while \ the \ lower \ has \ collections$ of furniture and Oriental art, České Švýcarsko National Park continues to the west of Děčín, so head past town on Rte. 13 to Libouchec, where a road runs north to Tisá, which has footpaths leading to a landscape of sandstone boulders, and on to the tabletop mountain of Děčínský Sněžník. Continue on Rte. 13 to Jílové and turn eastward to Děčín, an inland port on the River Labe with a sprawling, late 18th-century castle (see Hidden History).

ROADS: Local roads, Rte. 13

BRIVING TIME: 2 hours

WHEN TO GO: Year-round

PLANNING: czechtourism.com

FROM: Hřensko, Czech Republic To: Děčín, Czech Republic

DISTANCE: 70 miles (112 km)

I HIDDEN HISTORY I Fourteenth-century Dĕčin Castle was built as a fort, then reconstructed as a king's castle, before being used as a fort again. It was rebuilt over many years to its present Renaissance appearance by the Thun-Hohenstine family, who owned it from 1628 to 1932 and added the famous Rose Garden with its beautiful city views. In the 20th century, the castle was used as a barracks by Czech, German, and Soviet troops, who left it in a state of disrepair. After lying derelict for decades, the castle has now been restored to its former glory.

The Pravčická brána sandstone bridge is the largest natural bridge in central Europe.





ALPINE ROAD

Built with pleasure motoring in mind, the 280-mile (450 km) Deutsche Alpenstrasse (German Alpine Road) opens up the Bavarian Alps—with their romantic mountain scenery, picturesque towns, and traditional villages—to the driving adventurer.



The charming wooden maypole in Grassau shows off skilled Bavarian craftsmanship.

he eastern section of the Alpine Road—described here—zigzags its way through stunning scenery in the Chiemgau Mountains (Chiemgauer Alpen). Coming from Munich, leave the Autobahn E52/E60 at exit 106 and follow the B305 south through Bernau to the old health resort town of Grassau, which has a classic example of an onion-domed church and is overlooked by the peak of Hochplatte. Continue south to Marquartstein, a ski resort where Richard Strauss composed his opera Salome. Visit the 11th-century castle, then continue on the B305 as it winds its way to Reit im Winkl, a village with Tyrolean-style houses set in a valley surrounded by forested mountains. In Reit im Winkl, turn northeast through the Chiemgau Mountains, part of the Eastern Alps, and past a silvery chain of lakes. Turn left 20 minutes after Reit im Winkl to arrive in the town of Ruhpolding (see Highlights), where Duke Wilhelm V of Bavaria built a hunting lodge in 1597. Visitors come to see the 13th-century wood-carved Ruhpolding Madonna, an exquisite example of Bavarian craftsmanship on display in the baroque parish church.

Back on the B305, drive east and detour left onto the B306 to the village of Inzell with an onion-domed church, before the road joins the Alps-to-Baltic Vacation Route and runs southeast along the wooded Schwarzbach Valley. After crossing the watershed at the Schwarzbachwacht-Sattel Pass, the road descends through forest and pastureland with wonderful mountain views all around. Turn right into the village of Ramsau, whose early 16th-century parish church provides an irresistibly perfect Bavarian photo opportunity. After a few minutes' drive, the road comes to a little lake at Hintersee, above which steep slopes rise up to mountain peaks and a glinting glacier. Go back to the B305, and head to your destination, Berchtesgaden, a gorgeous little town sitting on a natural balcony over an idyllic valley (see Highlights).

The **Woodcutters Museum** in Ruhpolding is devoted to the days when wood was the primary building material. It has a selection of forestry huts and cabins.

HIGHLIGHTS |

Berchtesgaden's **Nationalparkhaus**, the interpretive center of Berchtesgaden National Park, is a good place to enjoy sublime views of the landscape surrounding the town.

From 1923–33, Berchtesgaden's Königliches Schloss was the home of Crown Prince Ruprecht, head of the former Bavarian royal family, the Wittelsbachs. It contains the Wittelsbach collections of paintings, sculptures, carvings, and furniture.

FROM: Autobahn exit 106 (Prien-Bernau), Germany To: Berchtesgaden, Germany ROADS: 8305, 8306 DISTANCE: 63 miles (102 km) DRIVING TIME: 1.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: The Biathlon World Cup is held in Ruhpolding every January, so make reservations early, germany,travel



OPPOSITE: Ramsau's beautiful church often appears on postcards of the area.

A CORNER OF A GREEK ISLAND

The mountain heights of northern Evvoia, Greece's second largest island, offer spectacular views of the mainland and of the island's green pastures, vineyards, olive groves, and forests, punctuated by delightful villages, old churches, and monasteries.

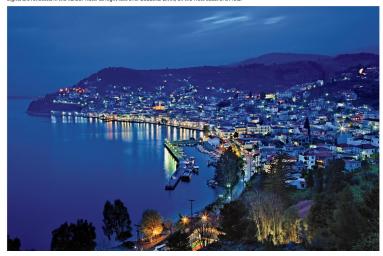
he long, thin, mountainous island of Evvoia hugs Greece's eastern Aegean coast and has a unique charm all its own. Start at the seaside town of Chalkida, with its excellent Archaeological Museum, leaving on Rte. 44, then turning left onto Rte. 77, marked for Mantoudi. The road passes coastal salt marshes, with glorious vistas back to the Greek mainland. After 7.5 miles (12 km), take the right fork on the local road to the small market town of Psachna, whose main church contains captivating 13th-century frescoes. Head back to Rte. 77 and continue north, passing olive groves and pine forest as mountains impose themselves on the scenery. As you ascend, look back to $the \ mainland \ for \ ever \ more \ incredible \ views. \ You'll \ also \ begin \ to see just \ how \ beautifully \ green \ Evvoia$ is. The road now follows a shimmering river through the deep, wooded Kleisoura Valley, furnished with walnut, plane, and poplar trees. Greek refugees who fled Turkey in 1923 founded Prokopi and brought $the \, mummified \, body \, of \, St. \, John \, the \, Russian, \, which \, is \, now \, in \, the \, church \, of \, Agios \, Ioannis \, o \, Rosos. \, From \, Ioannis \, o \, Rosos \, Contract \,$ $here, continue\ along\ Rte.\ 77\ for\ 5\ miles\ (8\ km)\ toward\ Limni,\ past\ the\ enchanting\ whitewashed\ houses$ $of the \ village \ of \ Mantoudi, whose \ main \ square \ is \ a \ delightful \ place \ to \ stop. \ Continue \ north \ past \ vineyards$ before leaving Rte. 77, following the left-hand fork in Strofylia past more hill villages. Descend to the $pretty\ coastal\ village\ of\ Limni,\ which\ has\ excellent\ seafood\ and\ pleasant\ pebble\ beaches.\ While\ here,$ $make\ time\ to\ walk\ to\ the\ spectacular\ seventh-century\ monastery\ of\ Moni\ Galataki,\ built\ on\ the\ site\ on\ the\ site\ of\ Moni\ Galataki,\ built\ on\ the\ site\ of\ Moni\ Galataki,\ built\ on\ the\ site\ on\ sit$ a temple to Poseidon. It has no formal opening hours, but everyone is welcome as long as they are dressed modestly.

■ EXCURSION ■ Just south of Chalkida, along the coastal road, lies Eretia, the most important historical site on Evoia. Although the modern town has grown up on top of the ancient site, there is still plenty to enjoy here. The Archaeological Museum includes a fearsome Gorgon's head, and the nearby House of Mossics is a restored fourth-century dwelling with fabulous floor mosaics. The town has other interesting remains, such as the ruins of an acropoils and the foundations of a temple of Apoli.



FROM: Chalkida, Greece
To: Limni, Greece
ROADS: Rtes. 44, 77
DISTANCE: 52.5 miles (84 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING:
aroundevia.com

Lights are reflected in the harbor water as night falls over beautiful Limni, on the west coast of Evvoia





Olive groves stretch to the horizon on an undulating landscape near the village of San Demetrio Corone

I ITALY I

CALABRIAN MOUNTAIN ROADS

Granite plateaus, meadows, mixed forests, pastures, lakes, deep valleys, and the high, snowy peaks of Calabria's Sila Mountains in Sila National Park combine to create a glorious variety of scenery in this deserted corner of southern Italy.

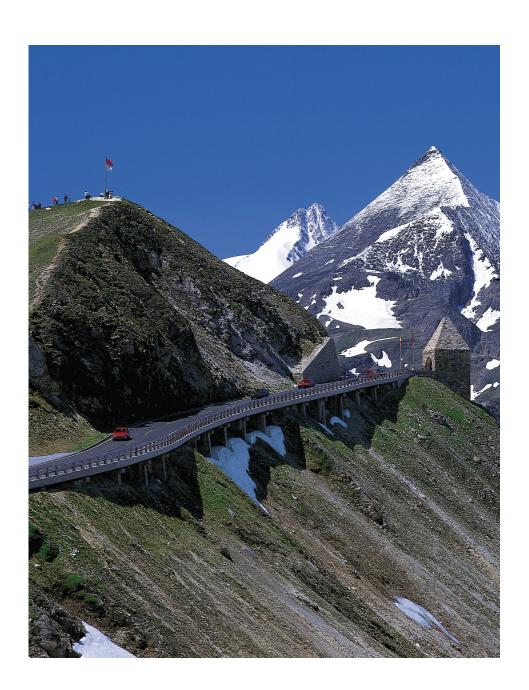
he village of San Demetrio Corone lies at the heart of southern Italy's Albanian (Arbëreshë) population, who arrived over hundreds of years due to military ties between Naples, Venice, and Albania. The people here have a unique dialect and maintain close links to their agrarian traditions. Take the minor, twisting road from the village, following it south through the Arbëreshë village of Acri, and pick up SS660 east. The road climbs through varied countryside to below Monte Forgiari on the northernmost edge of Sila National Park, which encompasses Calabria's finest wild mountain scenery. Bear right on SS177 to the junction with SS282 at the eastern edge of Lago di Cecita, one of the area's three large artificial lakes. You can take a short detour east here on SS282 to La Fossiata, the starting point of a number of well-organized hiking trails through the park. There is also a trailheadto the top of Serra Ripollata.

Return to the SS177 and continue to the ski trails and summer hiking routes of the resort of Camigliatello Silano. Then pick up the minor road (not the SS107) toward Spezzano, and after 6 miles (10 km) turn south on the Strada delle Vette (Road of the Peaks) toward Lorica and Lago Arvo. This mountain road is spectacular, reaching an altitude of more than 6,000 feet (1,829 m) on the slopes of Monte Botte Donato, the Sila Mountains' highest point. Turn right after 17 miles (27 km) at the lakeshore. following SS108 west, then left onto the SS179 at Bocca di Piazza, toward Taverna. You'll soon pass the modern resort of Villaggio Mancuso, with a visitor center for the Parco Nazionale della Sila. From $Taverna, the \,SS109\,winds\,to\,Catanzaro, a \,large\,city\,at\,the\,heart\,of\,the\,Ionian\,Coast\,known\,for\,its\,silk.$

FROM: San Demetrio Corone, Italy TO: Catanzaro, Italy ROADS: SS660, SS177, SS282, local roads. Strada delle Vette. SS108bis, SS179, SS109 DISTANCE: 88 miles (141 km) **DRIVING TIME: 2 hours** PLANNING: turiscalabria.it



HILLS & MOUNTAINS | 49



1 TOP OF THE ROCKIES SCENIC

Piercing three national forests, the byway rarely dips below 9,000 feet (2,743 m) as you drive through old gold-rush towns such as Leadville, the highest incorporated community in the U.S.A., with a quaint Victorian-era filmset appeal.

BYWAY, COLORADO

PLANNING: The drive starts at the junction of I-70 and Colo, 91 and runs south along Colo, 90 to Leadville, on U.S. 25 and Colo. 82 to Twin Lakes, and then back north to Minturn on U.S. 24. coloradodirectory.com

2 TRANS-ANDEAN HIGHWAY. CHILE/ARGENTINA

This dizzying 220-mile (350 km) drive from Santiago to Mendoza steeply snakes up through Chile to the 2-mile (3 km) long Cristo Redentor tunnel. On a clear day, look out for 22,841-foot (6,962 m) Cerro Aconcagua, the southern hemisphere's highest peak. In contrast, the Argentine side is a gentle descent past an alpine lake and through cactus fields.

PLANNING: Check weather forecasts; fog and clouds can impede mountain views. The road sometimes closes in winter. *visit-chile.org*, argentina.travel

3 OSADO SKYLINE DRIVE, SADO ISLAND, JAPAN

Sado Island's finest views are from the Osado Skyline Drive, slicing through mountains from Chiqusa to the Sado gold mine. The panoramas of the island's ver dant mountains are spectacular.

PLANNING: Car ferries to Ryotsu on Sado go from Niigata and Naoetsu on the mainland. The road closes in winter (November through April). into.go.jp

4 SERRA DO RIO DO RASTRO

ROUTE, BRAZIL

Escape the steamy coastal plain as you zigzag up the eastern flank of the Serra do Rio do Rastro range in southern Brazil. The 22-mile (35 km) drive starts in Lauro Müller. At each hairpin bend of the SC-390, the air gets fresher, the landscape greener. From the mirante (viewpoint) at the top, you can see as far as the Atlantic on a clear day. Carry on to the town of Bom Jardim da Serra. In winter there may even be snow up here, unheard of in most of Brazil.

THE TOP

SKYSCRAPING **DRIVES**

Nothing tests a car and its driver to the limit like taking a twisting, turning road past sheer drops. Here are 10 of the world's best mountain roads.

PLANNING: Combine your drive with a stay in one of the eco-lodges that dot the mountains. turismo.sc.gov.br/en/destinos/serra-catarinense

5 THUNDERBOLT'S WAY, GREAT **DIVIDING RANGE, AUSTRALIA**

Named for Frederick Ward, alias Captain Thunderbolt, a 19th-century bushranger, who roamed these parts, this 180-mile (290 km) paved road runs between Gloucester and Inverell. Completed in 1961, it slices through national parks and some of Australia's steepest, craggiest, and highest mountains, including the country's loftiest peak, Mount Kosciuszko, 7,310 feet (2,228 m) above sea level.

PLANNING: Allow time to stop at Carson's Lookout between Gloucester and Nowendoc, for delirious valley views, and the picnic area near the Barrington river bridge. thunderboltsway.com.au

6 HAI VAN PASS, VIETNAM

The 1,627-foot (496 m) pass straddles a mountain spur that juts into the South China Sea. Jungle covers the mountain slopes as you climb. Far below are glimpses of enticing coves and beaches. At the top, get out and scramble up to an old French bunker (a reminder of the country's war-torn past) for stunning views.

PLANNING: South of the pass, stop in Da Nang to enjoy a seafood meal. Carry on south to the atmospheric colonial city of Hoi An. *vietnam.travel/* places-to-go/central-vietnam/da-nang

OPPOSITE: The Grossglockner High Alpine Road brings the motorist to the sheer, icy world of Austria's highest mountain.

7 MUNNAR TO MARAYOOR, KERALA, INDIA

The hill station of Munnar, in the Western Ghats range of southwestern India, is the starting point for this 25-mile (40 km) drive along State Highway 17. Tea estates robe the mountainsides, giving way to forests of sandalwood as you approach your destination, Marayoor.

PLANNING: Visit Lakam and Thoovanam Falls and Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary, whose inhabitants include huge gaurs and Indian bison. *kerala*

8 TROLLSTIGEN ("TROLL'S LADDER"), NORWAY

Starting outside the fjord town of Åndalsnes, the narrow 7.6-mile (12.2 km) road climbs a sheer mountainside to reach the pass of Stigrøra. It includes 11 hairpins and a stone bridge over a chasm, at the bottom of which rage the falls of Stigfossen.

PLANNING: The road is closed in late autumn and winter, usually November through May, visitnorway.com/places-to-go/fjord-norway/ northwest/activities-and-attractions/trollstigen

9 PANORAMA ROUTE, MPUMALANGA, SOUTH AFRICA

Unforgettable panoramas, one of the world's largest canyons, and dramatic waterfalls are among the wonders strung together in this route along the Drakensberg escarpment of northeastern South Africa. Marvel at the lush Blyde River Canyon, the Three Rondavels, and the old gold-rush town of Pilgrim's Rest.

PLANNING: May through August is the best time to drive the route, southafrica.net/uk/en/ travel/article/the-panorama-route-you-ll-only -believe-it-when-you-see-it

10 GROSSGLOCKNER-HOCHALPENSTRASSE, AUSTRIA

On the road between Heiligenblut and Bruck over Austria's highest peak, the Grossglockner, brace yourself for 36 hairpin bends, wildlife including chamoix, marmots, and ibex, and—on a clear day—views of 37 mountains, all higher than 9.842 feet. (3,000 m), alongside 19 glaciers.

PLANNING: The road is generally open May through October, but check conditions before traveling. grossglockner.at









The city of Catania stands beneath Etna's imposing, and not always benevolent, glare.

ITALV

AROUND AN ACTIVE VOLCANO

 $This circuit\ around\ the\ slopes\ of\ Sicily's\ Monte\ Etna-Europe's\ largest\ active\ volcano-offers\ stunning\ scenic\ diversity,\ including\ pretty\ villages,\ orange\ groves\ and\ vineyards,\ scars\ left\ by\ recent\ lava\ flows,\ and\ a\ range\ of\ historical\ attractions.$

fter viewing the Greek and Roman remains of Catania, take the S284 west to Paternò, known for its orange groves and restored Norman castle. Continue on the S284 to the village of Adrano, one of Etna's most ancient settlements, whose 11th-century Norman castle houses an archaeological museum. Leave town on the S121 and, after 5 miles (8 km), look for signs to the Ponte dei Saraceni, a graceful multiarched medieval stone bridge spanning the rocky Simeto River. Drive upstream on minor roads to the beautiful Gola di Simeto, an 8-mile (18 km) gorge formed by lava flows. Return to Adrano and pick up the S284 north to Bronte, the center of Italy's pistachio industry. The gloriously high road between Bronte and Randazzo has some of the best views of Etna. Randazzo, the closest settlement to the volcano's summit (less than 10 miles/16 km away), has so far avoided Etna's wrath, but not World War II bombing, which took a heavy toll. Many of the buildings have now been restored, so the streets retain a medieval atmosphere. The 15th-century church of Santa Maria has some strange, dark lava columns.

From Randazzo the S120 runs eastward through some of the prettiest scenery in the Etna foothills. Just beyond the wine-making village of Passopisciary opu can see the massive lava flows from the 1981 eruption—the fertile volcanic soil now lush with olive trees and other plants. To explore Etna's northern slopes, continue east to the ski resort of Linguaglossa. Next, turn south on a minor road, through the village of Fornazzo, to the resort of Zafferana Etnea, which is surrounded by vineyards and orange groves. From here, you can detour west up a steep, spectacular minor road to the Rifugio Sapienza, a hotel built on the volcano's upper slopes, and return to Catania by minor roads. Otherwise, head east from Zafferana Etnea to the A18 autostrada to return to Catania.

FROM: Loop route from Catania, Italy ROADS: S121, S284, S120, A18 DISTANCE: 100 miles (160 km) DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Geological tours of Etna are available.



52 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

GOURMET ROAD TRIPS

DRIVING THROUGH SNOWDONIA

This drive through the wild, beautiful mountains that are now part of Snowdonia National Park in northwest Wales takes in medieval castles, steam railways, stunning coastline, moorland views, and attractive old towns.

rom Dolgellau, take the A496 west and north to Harlech Castle, one of the Iron Ring of fortresses built by Edward I in the 13th century around the perimeter of the northern half of Wales to subdue the territory. The redoubt's great gatehouse, 40-foot (12 m) walls, and corner towers are perched on top of a crag, exuding impregnability. From here, the road crosses the Dwyryd estuary at Maen $twrog-turn\ left\ here\ onto\ the\ A487,\ passing\ the\ steam\ trains\ and\ stations\ of\ the\ Ffestiniog\ Railway,$ built to carry slate from the Blaenau Ffestiniog hills down to the harbor at Porthmadog. The railway closed for business in 1946, but enthusiasts have reopened it for passengers. From Porthmadog, head north (right) on the A498 over the steep and spectacular pass of Aberglaslyn, and on to Beddgelert. $Here, beside the \ River \ Glaslyn, is the grave of \ Gelert, faithful \ hound of \ medieval \ prince \ Llewelyn \ the$ Great, who killed the dog in a rage, mistakenly thinking that it had killed his baby son. The A4085 snakes its way to Caernarfon (see Hidden History), where you rejoin the A487 and skirt Menai Strait, a narrow $strip\ of\ water\ separating\ the\ Welsh\ mainland\ from\ the\ Isle\ of\ Anglesey.\ Just\ across\ the\ strait's\ westerly$ $bridge \, is \, Llanfair pwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrn drobwllll antysiliogogogoch, Britain's \, longest \, place-name.$ It means "Church of St. Mary in the hollow of the white hazel near a rapid whirlpool and St. Tysilio near the red cave," and is usually shortened to Llanfair P.G. Make time to visit Beaumaris Castle, the last castle built by Edward I. Back on the mainland, the A55 heads east, skirting Bangor and continuing north to Conwy, a small town ringed with medieval walls and home to another of Edward's castles, crouching over the Conwy estuary with the mountains rising behind.

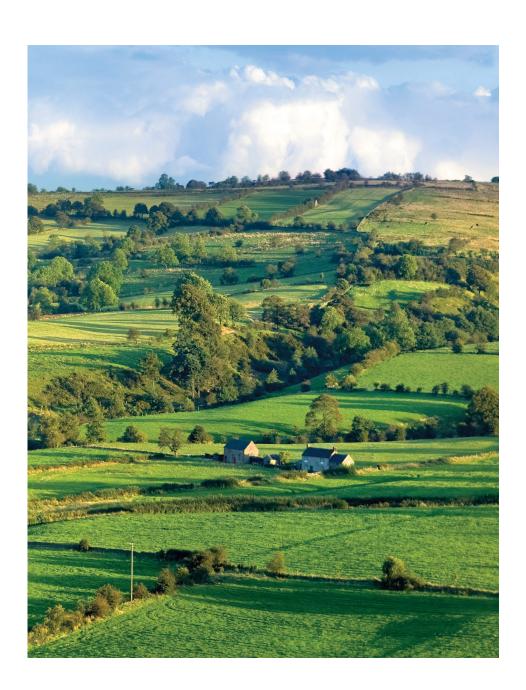
I HIDDEN HISTORY I Started in 1283, Caernarfon Castle's crenellated walls and octagonal towers still impart a message of strength. Built by Edward I as part of his Iron Ring, it is Wales's most formidable castle. The Eagle Tower, decorated with eagle sculptures, was where Edward II, the first Prince of Wales, was born in 1307; the Queen's Tower houses the Regimental Museum of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, Wales's oldest regiment. Charles, Prince of Wales, was invested here in 1969.



FROM: Dolgellau, Wales
To: Conwy, Wales
ROADS: A496, A487, A498,
A4085, A55
DISTANCE: 85 miles (137 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: visitwales.co.uk

 $Perched \ on \ top \ of \ a \ rocky \ outcrop \ beside \ the \ sea, \ Harlech \ Castle \ has \ breathtaking \ views \ inland. \ In \ the \ 15th \ century, \ it \ with stood \ a \ seven-year \ siegent \ decoration \ for \ rocky \ outcrop \ beside \ the \ sea, \ Harlech \ Castle \ has \ breathtaking \ views \ inland. \ In \ the \ 15th \ century, \ it \ with stood \ a \ seven-year \ siegent \ decoration \$





THE PEAK DISTRICT'S HIGH ROAD

The bleakly beautiful hills, rocky outcrops, and wild moorland of northern England's Peak District—one of Britain's most important national parks—also offer beautiful English villages and winding roads that are a motorist's delight.



The Edwardian Opera House in Buxton was built in 1903 and still presents a variety of shows

egin in the Georgian spa town of Buxton, whose elegant central crescent of sandstone houses is modeled on the Royal Crescent in Bath. The Edwardian Opera House is worth visiting for its rich gold-leaf interior. You can also fill your water bottle from the natural mineral stream at St. Ann's Well. Then take the A53 and A54 west for 10 miles (16 km), and pick up the minor road through the village of Wincle to Leek, home to Brindley Mill, a watermill built in 1752. Turn east across the high, lonely moors, passing through the picturesque country villages of Warslow, Alstonefield, and Ilam, to Ashbourne. This beautiful Georgian town is a good base for hiking—the 13-mile (21 km) Tissington Trail and the 17-mile (27 km) High Peak Trail, which both run along disused railway lines, begin here.

From Ashbourne, the B5035 runs through Kniveton to Wirksworth. Turn north here on the A6 to Matlock, a late-Georgian spa town complete with an 1853 hydro health center on the hill above. The B5057 and B5056 run through beautiful upland countryside on the way to Winster and past Haddon Hall (see Highlights). Turn right to Rowsley on the A6, then left on the B6012 to Chatsworth House (see Highlights). You can detour here into Bakewell, a town famous for its eponymous tart, consisting of a pastry filled with ground almond paste and jam.

From Chatsworth House, follow the B6012, A623, and B6001 north to the pretty village of Hathersage, then the A625 and A6013 to Ladybower Reservoir, and turn left onto the A57 to Snake Pass. The reservoirs to your right are where the Royal Air Force squadron known as the Dambusters trained for their epic bombing raid on German dams in World War II. The ascent to Snake Pass is one of the most exciting roads in the U.K., twisting, turning, and switchbacking across some of the highest points in the Peak District. Descending from the pass, the road offers views of the metropolis of Manchester some 10 miles (16 km) away. And look for Bleaklow, where the remains of a U.S.A.F. Superfortress that crashed in 1948 still lie scattered across the ground. From the former mill town of Glossop, take the A624 and A6 back to Buxton.

OPPOSITE: The green, undulating landscape of the Peak District is a haven for hikers.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Haddon Hall is a country house on the River Wye, with origins in the 11th century, it has a Tudor long gallery and a 14th-century great hall, and has appeared in many TV shows, such as the 2005 adaptation of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice.

The Peak District's best known and most impressive house is Chatsworth House, the TVI-century Baroque palace of the Dukes of Devonshire with extensive and beautiful grounds. The finely furnished state rooms have cellings painted by Verrio and Louis Laguerre and paintings by Van Dyck, Van der Vaart, and Rembrandt.

FROM: Loop route from Buxton, England

ROADS: A53, A54, B5035, A6, B5057, B5056, B6012, A623, B6001, A625, A6013, A57, A624, local roads

DISTANCE: 120 miles (193 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: visitpeakdistrict.com



EUROPE'S DEEPEST CANYON

As the Verdon River carved through 16 miles (26 km) of limestone in the Alpes-de Haute-Provence, in southeast France, it created the deepest and one of the most beautiful canyons in Europe—the Gorges du Verdon.

ith its narrow medieval streets centered around a 12th-century church and workshops selling the faience pottery for which it is famous, the pretty town of Moustiers-Ste.-Marie has plenty to explore. Leave town along the narrow, twisting D952 as it runs high above the gorge toward the Rive Droite, or northern rim, climbing past views of distant Lac de Ste.-Croix and descending on the edge of a cliff with the Verdon River far below. At the hairpin bend at Bélvèdere de Mayreste, you can stop and scramble 500 feet (152 m) up the rocks for your first view of the canyon. The road then climbs to a plateau filled with lavender fields before descending to La Palud-sur-Verdon, a hub for activities such as rock climbing, rafting, and hiking. Pick up the Route des Crètes (D23) just outside town. The dizzyingly high 14-mile (23 km) loop road follows the plateau's edge high above the river. Midway around, the Refuge des Malines serves up snacks, drinks, and sublime views. The Martel Trail, the most popular section of the GR4 walking route, runs through here. Back at La Palud, turn east on the D952. After passing woods, valleys, and wildflower fields, the road snakes down to Point Sublime. From here you can hike up the hill to see the view of Samson Corridor, the entrance to the Verdon Gorge.

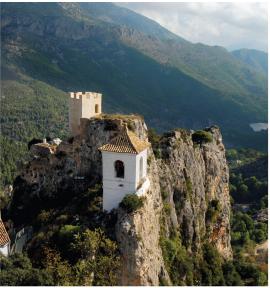
Drive through the Tunnel du Tusset, cross the river at Pont de Soleils, and take the D95S for the return drive along the Rive Gauche. Beyond tiny Soleils, turn southwest on the D90 to the medieval town of Trigance, with its hilltop castle. Climb through fields and woods, then descend on the D71 through the Balcons de la Mescla, where the Verdon and Artuby Rivers meet. The road reaches Pont de l'Artuby, a 600-foot (183 m) high bridge popular with bungee jumpers. Beyond, you are on the gorge's edge, with pullovers from which to admire the views. After the Tunnel de Fayet, the road turns away from the gorge and follows Cavaliers Cliff. Fill your water bottle from the Source de Vaumale before ascending to the coad's highest point, at 2,625 feet (800 m) above the Verdon. The road twists down to Aiguines, with a centuries-old legacy of boules-making, and past Lac de Ste.-Croix, to return to Moustiers on the D957.



FROM: Loop route from Moustiers-Ste--Marie, France RAOAS: POSZ, DZ3/Route des Crêtes, D25S, D90, D71, D957 DISTANCE: 50 miles (80 km) DRIVING TIME: 15 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Lac de Ste--Croix is popular for water sports—all kinds of equipment can be rented there, provenceweb.fr

The steep and rocky Gorges du Verdon is sometimes known as "Europe's Grand Canyon."





The village of Guadalest's cliff-top towers can be seen from miles around.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

For an antidote to the dry sierra, take a short detour from Callosa down the CV715 toward Bolulla to the rushing springs, environmental exhibits, and small restaurants of **Fonts de l'Algar**.

The Casa Orduna, Guadalest's noble mansion and now the Museo Municipal, was built in 1644 and rebuilt in 1708 after the War of Succession. Inside are the furnishings, paintings (including the anonymous, double-sided Ecce Homo), and library of the Orduna family. From the garden, steps lead up to Sant Josep Castle, part of which is now a cemetery, with panoramic views.

SPAIN

HILL VILLAGES OF EASTERN SPAIN

The terraced hillsides of orange and lemon groves and olive and almond trees settled in the peaceful scenery around the village of Guadalest in eastern Spain have breathtaking views over the surrounding sierra (setta in Catalan) and delightful old villages.

rom the coastal resort of Altea, take the Valencia road (N332), following the bay. Head northwest toward Callosa d'en Sarrià on the A150 and CV755, as the Serra de Guadalest looms ahead with terraced orange and lemon groves in the foreground. From Callosa d'en Sarrià, an agricultural $town\ with\ a\ medieval\ arch\ and\ old\ walls\ around\ its\ Plaza\ del\ Castell,\ the\ CV755\ runs\ northwest\ through$ rugged limestone hills covered in pine trees and maquis. Granite pinnacles topped by white towers greet your approach to the village of Guadalest, where you can wander the old streets and take tours of the castle (see Highlights) and the ethnological museum, which has displays on the village's $history\, and\, chocolate-making\, industry.\, From\, Guadalest, the\, CV70\, winds\, around\, the\, flank$ of the Guadalest Valley, through terraces of almond trees (covered in pink and white blossoms in February), to Confrides at the source of the Guadalest River, where a giant walnut tree graces the village's main square. The road now winds through rocky moorland and over a high pass. Turn left onto the CV770, then right onto the CV781 and stop $\,$ to look at Penàguila's medieval gateway and noble mansions. Head for Sella on the CV785, through the forested Serra de Aitana where the mountain of Puig Campana keeps watch Sella has Roman ruins and the remains of a medieval castle, and is a good starting point for hikes. The CV770 and CV758 lead through terraced or chards to Finestrat—walk up to the church and hermitage of the Remedio, built over an old Moorish castle. After enjoying the fine views of the Mediterranean, take the CV758, CV70, and N332 to Albir.

FROM: Altea, Spain To: Albir, Spain ROADS: N332, A150, CV755, CV70, CV770, CV781, CV785, CV758

DISTANCE: 63 miles (102 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: In Penàguila, Penya
de l'Aguila restaurant serves
good local dishes.
benidorm-info.com





Expect to encounter the occasional bullock cart on the highway's winding route through the Lesotho highlands.

LESOTHO

MALUTI MOUNTAIN HIGH

The highest peaks and road passes in southern Africa lie along this adventurous route through the Maluti Mountains of northern Lesotho. Hiking and history await summer road-trippers, while snow sports tempt those who visit during the winter.

he only nation that's completely above 1,000 meters (3,281 feet) in elevation, Lesotho's lofty landscape is often compared with the White Mountains of New Hampshire. That's especially true of the yawning valleys, grassy plateaus, and rocky peaks along this road trip route through the Maluti Mountains. Whether you're driving in from neighboring South Africa or renting a vehicle on arrival at Moshoeshoe Airport, this loop starts and ends in Maseru, the national capital. Leaving the city behind, Highway AI (Main North) ensures a smooth ride up the Mohokare River Valley with its countless villages. Spot many of the locals riding ponies or wrapped in traditional Basotho blankets. In Leribe, Triassic reptiles immortalized themselves with "dinosaur footprints" in the riverside sandstone. Another hour up the road is Liphofung Rock Shelter Historic Site. Occupied for centuries by the San (Bushman) people, the grotto is decorated with vivid rock art. King Moshoeshoe I, who united Lesotho into a single nation in the early 1800cs, behatered in the overhang during incurses a grees the realing

single nation in the early 1800s, sheltered in the overhang during journeys across the realm.

The AI soon starts its steep climb, topping off at Mahlasela Pass (10,754 feet/3,278 m), the highest motor road in southern Africa. Just beyond the pass is Afriski Mountain Resort. In addition to good food and overnight digs, the resort offers year-round outdoor adventure: skiing and snowboarding in winter, hiking, mountain biking, rappelling, and 4WD routes in warmer weather. The highway continues to LetSeng diamond mine, where many of the world's largest stones have been found. Reaching Mokhotlong, the trip transitions from the relatively smooth AI to unpawed roads. Yet the sinuous 63-mile (102 km) drive to Thaba-Teska is one of the route's most scenic, a roller-coaster ride over high passes and deep valleys. Mohale Oa Masite Lodge in Thaba-Teska offers one last chance for an overnight stop before the pawement resumes and the A3 meanders back into Maseru.

FROM: Loop route from Maseru, Lesotho ROADS: A1 and A3 DISTANCE: 557 miles (575 km) DRIVING TIME: 11 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round (if the road isn't blocked by snow) PLANNING: 4WD is essential for the unpaved portions and nearly the entire route in winter.



ALSO RECOMMENDED

PEAK TO PEAK SCENIC BYWAY, COLORADO

Less than an hour from Denver, this 55-mile (88 km) route from Central City north to Estes Park borders Rocky Mountain National Park, where peaks tower up to a mile (1.6 km) above the road. Detour onto one of the gravel roads off the highway to reach lakes and secluded campgrounds.

MOUNT WASHINGTON AUTO ROAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Leading to the "Top of New England," this road rises steeply above the treeline and climbs to the summit of Mount Washington, the highest peak in the northeastern U.S. The region is famed for its spectacular fall colors, with breathtaking views over White Mountain National Forest and the Presidential Range.

visitwhitemountains.com

RICHARDSON HIGHWAY, ALASKA

Alaska's first major road traces an old gold-rush route from Valdez to Fairbanks. traveling 368 miles (592 km) through lush Alaska scenery. Pass the breathtaking Worthington Glacier, and watch for wildlife, such as the brown bear, crossing the road, travelalaska.com

• CONTINENTAL DIVIDE, PANAMA

Surmounting Panama's serrated spine, Hwy. 4 from Chiriquí snakes sharply as it rises from the Pacific over the Continental Divide and dramatically drops some 5,000 eet (1,524 m) to the town of Punta Peña and the Caribbean coastal plains. visitnanama com

• IBUSUKI SKYLINE DRIVE, JAPAN

Close to the shoreline, yet riding high along mountain ridges, this serpentine road along the Satsuma Peninsula is seldom congested. Look out across the sea to catch sight of the active Sakurajima volcano billowing ash as you drive south from Kagoshima around the eponymous bay, relaxing in Ibusuki's warm crater lake before completing this 43-mile (70 km) route to Ei.

jnto.go.jp/eng

• FLÓRINA TO KASTORIÁ, GREECE

From the pretty market town of Flórina, drive east along the E-86 through the mountains of western Macedonia, passing the village of Andartikó. Stop at the Monastery of Panagia Myriotissa to see Christian art from the 12th century and a nearby tree rumored to be 900 years old. From here, detour one hour to the east to visit Nymfeo, a town set in the heights of 4,429foot (1,350 m) Mount Visti, or just continue the few remaining miles south to downtown Kastoriá, a city jutting into enormous and beautiful Lake Orestiada.

visitgreece.gr/en/main_cities/kasto

GLOSSGLOCKNER HIGH ALPINE ROAD, AUSTRIA

Flower-filled meadows teeming with wildlife bring the Grossglocknerstrasse alpine road alive even on cloudy days. The route begins in the pretty mountain village of Heiligenblut and runs north for 30 miles (48 km), negotiating 36 twisting bends around Grossglockner Mountain and Perenze Glacier. It ends south of the stunning lakeside resort of Zell am See. Many drivers carry on to Salzburg, 25 miles (40 km) farther north.

grossglockner.at

• GREAT ST. BERNARD PASS, SWITZERLAND/ITALY

The most famous mountain pass in the Alps, this 45-mile (72 km) route from Martigny, Switzerland, to Aosta, Italy, offers mesmerizing views of glaciers, canyons, and lakes. Traversed by Julius Caesar, Hannibal, and Napoleon, the pass has a special place in history. It is open from the middle of June through October. myswitzerland.com

HAY-ON-WYE, ENGLAND/WALES

From Hay-on-Wye's bookshops, head south along Forest Road to enter Brecon Beacons National Park. Stop at the tiny church of Capel-y-ffin, whose east window is engraved with the words, "I shall lift up mine eyes to the hills whence cometh my salvation." Continue to Llanthony to view a ruined medieval priory, before carrying on to the town of Abergavenny.

MALOTI MOUNTAINS,

From Golden Gate Highlands National Park, head west along R712/R711 through the Maloti Mountains, enjoying spectacular sandstone formations that gleam yellow, brown, and pink in the varying light. After 34 miles (54 km) of undulating countryside, passing some of South Africa's finest landscapes, you arrive at the small town of Fouriesburg.

southafrica.net

SUHUA HIGHWAY, TAIWAN

Gouged out of cliff and mountainside, this 75-mile (120 km) highway along Taiwan's eastern coast links the fishing port of Su'ao with Hualien City. The most spectacular stretch is the 12 miles (20 km) where the highway forms a twisting ledge carved into the marble and gneiss of Qingshui Cliffs, an eastern outcrop of Taiwan's Central Mountain Range. More sedate delights lie at either end, including Nanfang'ao, south of Su'ao, known for its seafood restaurants. eng.taiwan.net.tw

PATAPAT VIADUCT, LUZON, PHILIPPINES

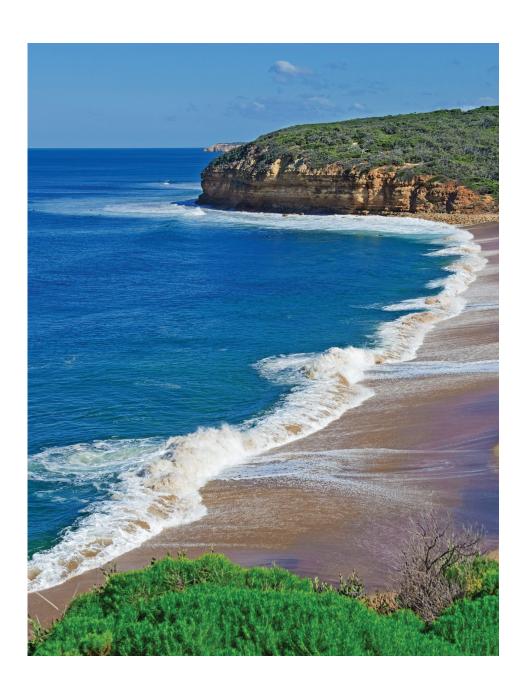
The scenic mountain road winding from the surfers' resort of Pagudpud northeast toward Cagayan is flanked by lush vegetation. A highlight is the elevated Patapat Viaduct, which affords splendid vistas of Pasaleng Bay on one side and waterfalls on the other.

visitmyphilippines.com

SHILLONG TO CHERRAPUNJEE, MEGHALAYA, INDIA

Emerald hillsides and valleys filled with mist are the hallmarks of this 33-mile (53 km) drive through the East Khasi Hills of northeastern India. As befits the wettest place on earth-with an annual rainfall of 470 inches (1,200 cm) in parts-rivers and waterfalls abound. Don't miss the Elephant Falls near Shillong or the Seven Sisters and Nohkalikai Falls near Cherrapuniee, Pedestrian bridges made from the aerial roots of living rubber fig trees are a local specialty. Drive to Nongriat, near Cherrapunjee, for an impressive double-decker specimen.

HILLS & MOUNTAINS | 59





BY SEA & SHORE

icture a romantic drive and the image most likely to spring to mind is a road that runs along the water's edge, skirting a mountain-fringed lake or curving high above a turquoise sea. Small wonder that these journeys conjure up a powerful $sense\, of\, freedom\, and\, adventure.\, They take\, us\, to\, places$ where the worlds of land, sky, and water meet. Some of the roads are legends in their own right. For instance, California's Rte. 1 clings to North America's western edge, swinging out over the Pacific Ocean in a spectacular journey southward through the mountainous landscapes and alluring coves of Big Sur. Italy's famed Amalfi Drive, familiar to lovers of classic European movies, is a veritable thriller of scenic switchbacks and heart-stopping sea views, ideal for drivers with romantic souls and nerves of steel. And for intrepid travelers on a quest for nature, routes lead north to the whale-watching grounds of Nova Scotia and south to Australia's Great Ocean Road for an epic $journey\ of\ mountain scapes,\ rain forests,\ off shore\ rock$ formations, and beaches that seem to go on forever.

A beautiful beach in its own right, Bells Beach near Torquay is one of Australia's classic surfing locations. It is one of many highlights of Victoria's Great Ocean Road, which links Melbourne and Warrnambool.

BY SEA & SHORE | 61



A stranded iceberg sits gleaming white and incongruous in the busy little fishing port of Old Bonaventure on the Bonavista Peninsula.

CANADA

ALONG NEWFOUNDLAND'S SHORES

Passing some of the oldest European settlements in North America, this drive around Newfoundland's Avalon and Bonavista peninsulas encompasses desolate land- and seascapes, and showcases wildlife from kittiwakes and razorbills to caribou and the odd roadside moose.

t. John's, a steep-alleyed port on the Avalon Peninsula, has fortifications at Signal Hill dating from the Napoleonic Wars. From here, head south on Pitts Memorial Drive and Hwy. 10. At Bay Bulls, take a boat to the four islands of Witless Bay Ecological Reserve, a summer breeding ground for more than 2 million seabirds, including kittiwakes, razorbills, and guillemots. Back on the mainland, continue south to Ferryland. Established in the 17th century, this town is one of the earliest British settlements in Canada. From here, the vistas expand and the landscape becomes more barren. The sense of being swallowed by the vastness of the sprawling topography intensifies as you round the peninsula. Watch out for some of the world's largest caribou as the fog rolls in.

From the whale-watching point of St. Vincent's, follow Hwy. 90 toward Holyrood, passing picturesque coves, rocky ridges, and a bevy of fishing villages. Then head north into Brigus, a former sealing port with Protestant churches and a circular plan that reflects its English heritage. Proceed north on Hwy. 70, past the rusting hulk of S.S. Ryle beached at Harbour Grace, where Amelia Barhart launched her first solo transatlantic flight in 1932. From windswept Carbonear, take Hwy. 74 northwest across a stark, lunar landscape dotted with stunted spruce trees and shallow ponds. At the eastern shore of Trinity Bay, you pass Heart's Content Cable Station, the western terminal of the first transatlantic cable, laid in 1866. As you turn south on Hwy. 80, you pass the bayside towns of Heart's Desire and Heart's Delight-Islington. Drive northwest across expanses of rock-strewn tundra on Trans-Canada 1 until you reach Hwy. 230, which leads up the Bonavista Peninsula. Pause in the town of Trinity—a gem not to be missed. An old English fishing and mercantile town, it is now preserved as a national heritage community. Continue to the 500-year-old seaport of Bonavista, sprawled across the tree-less barrens at the peninsula's tip.

FROM: St. John's, Canada
To: Bonavista, Canada
RoaDas; Pitts Memorial Drive,
Hwys: 10, 90, 70, 74, 80, TransCanada I, Hwy. 230, Goal roads
DISTANCE: 430 miles (692 km)
DRIVING TIME: 7 hours
WHEN TO GO: June through
October
PLANNING:
newfoundlandlabrador.com



62 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

| CANADA |

CAPE BRETON ISLAND

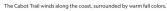
One of the most memorable drives in North America, the Cabot Trail loops around the northern tip of Nova Scotia, offering sightings of whales offshore, moose inland, and bald $eagles\ overhead,\ all\ set\ against\ a\ backdrop\ of\ mountains\ and\ a\ rugged\ coast.$

he village of Baddeck was the adopted summer home of Alexander Graham Bell (see Hidden History), who said of the region: "For simple beauty, Cape Breton Island outrivals them all." From Baddeck, head west on Trans-Canada 105 to join the Cabot Trail. Beyond the Marga $ree\ River-a\ great\ spot\ for\ salmon\ fishing-and\ the\ Acadian\ port\ of\ Ch\'eticamp,\ moody\ mountains$ $loom\ ahead\ as\ the\ trail\ enters\ Cape\ Breton\ Highlands\ National\ Park.\ In\ the\ park,\ a\ kaleidoscope$ of views greets you as you follow a rising and falling road past a variety of ecosystems, including lakes, bogs, hardwood forests, mountain ridges, and wild coastline. On the way to Pleasant Bay, stop at one of the designated pull-offs for impressive views of the sea, and at Lone Shieling leave $your \, car \, and \, walk \, to \, the \, reconstructed \, Highland \, crofter's \, cottage \, nearby. \, Drive \, inland \, toward \, Cape$ North, keeping an eye out for moose by the road on the way to Neil's Harbour. The road soon hugs the coast again and the pink-colored rocks stretching out to sea at Black Brook Cove come into view, with Ingonish Bay, dominated by the slopes of Cape Smokey, ahead. Park at the Tudor-style Keltic $Lodge\ on\ the\ spectacular\ Middle\ Head\ peninsula,\ which\ cuts\ Ingonish\ Bay\ in\ two,\ and\ walk\ the\ trail$ to the peninsula's end for views of Cape Smokey and Tern Rock. In summer, whale-watching tours leave from here. After Ingonish, follow the Cabot Trail south over Cape Smokey as it passes a series of $Gaelic fishing\ villages\ and\ clings\ precariously\ to\ the\ steep\ sides\ of\ St.\ Ann's\ Bay.\ At\ South\ Gut\ St.\ Anns,$ stop at the Gaelic College, which has been a driving force behind the Gaelic revival in Nova Scotia since 1938.

I HIDDEN HISTORY I In Baddeck, the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site presents an interactive walk through Bell's world and a comprehensive collection of his inventions and artifacts, including replicas and models of telephones and the 60-foot (18 m) long hydrofoil HD-4, which was the fastest boat in the world in 1919. The 25-acre (10 ha) site is situated above Baddeck Bay, on Bras d'Or Lake overlooking Bell's summer



FROM: Baddeck, Canada To: South Gut St. Anns, Canada ROADS: Trans-Canada 105, Cabot Trail DISTANCE: 186 miles (299 km)
DRIVING TIME: 4 hours WHEN TO GO: Late June through mid-October
PLANNING: cabottrail.com





MAINE'S RUGGED COAST

An undiscovered gem, this drive is one of the least traveled in the United States. You should be able to watch the surf crashing against Schoodic Point and the "boiling tides" of Cobscook Bay in relative seclusion.

rom the small city of Ellsworth, a bustling center in the tourist season, head southeast on U.S. 1, crossing Taunton Bay and past views of Cadillac Mountain and Mount Desert Island. Enjoy coastline scenery for 16 miles (26 km) before turning right on Me. 186 and following the winding road along the shore of Frenchman Bay to Winter Harbor village, where a turnoff brings you to Acadia National Park's Schoodic Point, a preserve around the windswept granite shores of Schoodic Peninsula. Continue on Me. 186 through Birch Harbor and rejoin U.S. 1 to reach Washington County, once the territory of Passamaquoddy Indians. Drive north through Cherryfield, the "blueberry capital of the

world," and on to Columbia Falls on U.S. 1, and stop by the Thomas Ruggles House, built for a rich lumber dealer in 1818. Just past town, take Me. 187 south to the fishing community of Jonesport, where cruises leave to Machias Seal Island or Petit Manan Island. Once back on U.S. 1, look for the turnoff to the sandy beaches and freshwater swimming pond of Roque Bluffs State Park. Continue through the shire town (county seat) of Machias, where you can turn right for a look at the twice-ruined fort at Fort O'Brien State Historic Site. Soon after Machias, U.S. 1 enters Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge—a breeding ground for migratory birds, including the elusive American woodcock—bordering Cobscook Bay. Tides here average 24 feet (7.3 m) high—Native Americans called the bay "boiling tides." Continue north past the 45th parallel picnic area, through the small town of Perry, and then past the granite cliffs of St. Croix River to Calais, one of the busiest ports of entry on the U.S.—Canada border.

EXCURSION ↑ Around 16 miles (26 km) beyond Machias, turn right onto Me. 189 for **Quoddy Head State Park**, the easternmost point in the U.S., with views of the Bay of Fundy, which has tides of up to 40 feet (12 m) -som

of the highest tides in the world-and Campobello Island, the Canadian vacation home of Franklin D. Rosewelt.

Today, the 2,800-acre (13.5 ha) Rosewelt Campobello International Park preserves the grand, 34-room summer

home of the former president.



FROM: Ellsworth, Maine
TO: Calais, Maine
ROADS: U.S. I. Me. 186, 187
DISTANCE: 197 miles (317 km)
DRIVING TIME: 4 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: The loop road
around Schoolic Point is
one way.
nationalparkacadia.com

Sunlight glints on the rocks around the rugged coastline of Schoodic Peninsula.





MIAMI AND THE KEYS

Between Miami's glitzy, high-rise glamor and Key West's bohemian eccentricities, this $drive-one\ of\ the\ most\ scenic\ in\ the\ U.S.-takes\ in\ jungle\ gardens,\ the\ wildlife-filled$ backwaters of Everglades National Park, and the reefs of the Florida Keys.

fter enjoying the urban delights of Miami, head out of town on Fla. A1A from Miami Beach across Biscayne Bay, where you'll get a good view of the city's towering skyline. Drive through the plush suburb of Coconut Grove and take Old Cutler Road to Fairchild Tropical Botanic $Garden, a \, botanical \, wonderland \, of \, ferns, shrubs, and \, lily \, pools. \, Continue \, on \, U.S. \, 1 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, on \, U.S. \, 1 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 2 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 2 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 2 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 2 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 2 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 2 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 2 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 2 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 3 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 3 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 3 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 3 to \, Bis cayne \, National \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 3 to \, Bis cayne \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 3 to \, Bis cayne \, Continue \, On \, U.S. \, 4 to \,$ Park, which is almost entirely submerged in water and inhabited by fish and other marine animals. Farther south, take Fla. 9336 west through fields of strawberries, sugarcane, and tropical plants to reach Everglades National Park, a 1.5-million-acre (607,028 ha) subtropical wilderness that is home to delicate $mangrove\ swamps, crocodiles, alligators, turtles, and many\ species\ of\ birds.$

Backtrack to U.S. 1 and head south, crossing over the first of 42 bridges that span the sun-warmed Florida Keys. Snorkel with vibrantly colored tropical fish at the National Marine Sanctuary on Key Largo, the longest island in the Keys, before continuing south on the Overseas Highway. The $road\ is\ lined\ with\ hibiscus\ and\ palms,\ with\ views\ of\ emerald\ water\ stretching\ away\ on\ any\ on\$ either side. Stop at Long Key State Park to take the 1.25-mile (2 km) Golden Orb Trail along the lagoon and beach. Back on U.S. 1, cross Seven Mile Bridge-one of the world's longest—and proceed to Bahia Honda State Park, which has exotic West Indian plants and one of the few natural sand beaches in the Keys. Continue across $\operatorname{Big}\nolimits$ Pine Key to the rowdy bars and posh boutiques of Key West, one of the state's most distinctive and endearing cities.

FROM: Miami Beach, Florida To: Key West, Florida ROADS: U.S. 41/Fla. A1A, Fla. 9336, U.S. 1, Overseas Highway, local roads DISTANCE: 240 miles (386 km)
DRIVING TIME: 5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Traffic is heavy on
the Overseas Highway in peak
season (winter through spring).





The prow of a skipjack sailboat moored in sunny Dogwood Harbor, Chesapeake Bay

MARYIAND

CHESAPEAKE COUNTRY

Wooden skipjacks sail on the Chesapeake Bay, broad tidal rivers drain tranquil farmlands, and Georgian and Victorian architecture lines old town streets in this relaxed part of Maryland, halfway between Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

hesapeake City, a handsomely restored 19th-century town dotted with inns, cafés, and marinas, is your starting point. The first half of the route follows the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway (Md. 213 south), past fields of corn and soybeans. You soon cross the Bohemia and Sassafras Rivers—the latter thought to have been explored by the early settler Captain John Smith in 1608. Continue to Chestertown and look around the Colonial House Museum and the 18th-century White Swann Tavern B&B. Continue through Centreville, whose architecture ranges from Federal to Late Victorian. A detour from Queenstown follows the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway toward the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center, a preserve with trails, exhibits, and ecology-oriented programs. Back on Md. 213, head south to reach the picturesque, 19th-century Old Wye Mill. To find your way to the old harbor town of St. Michaels for a lunch of boiled crabs at one of the town's dockside eateries, head south on Md. 662 toward Easton, turning onto Md. 322, then west onto Md. 33. Follow Md. 33 across the bridge over Knapps Narrows to leave the mainland and arrive at Tilghman Island, traditionally home to the hardy individuals who make their living fishing for oysters. At the fork 2.5 milles (4 km) farther on, bear right onto Black Walnut Point Road. The drive ends at the Black Walnut Point Inn., perhaps the most secluded and rustic B&B on the entire eastern shore.

I WILDLIFE ENCOUNTER I Past Chestertown is Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge, a short side trip down Md. 20 and 445 west and south. This island refuge is known for its migrant bird populations, which include more than 100,000 ducks, swans, and geese, along with song- and shorebirds. You may also spot baid eagles. Recreational activities include boating, fishing, crabbing, and hiking along the more than 6 miles (10 km) of roads, trails, and boardwalks.

FROM: Chesapeake City, Maryland To: Tilghman Island, Maryland ROADS: Md. 213, 662, 322, 33, local roads DISTANCE: 100 miles (160 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 hours WHEN TO GO: Spring and fall PLANNING: chesapeakebyway.org



66 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

MICHIGAN I

AROUND WHITEFISH BAY

An idyllic journey around Lake Superior's Whitefish Bay reveals pristine hardwood forests, mountains and beaches, wildflowers, shimmering views, and an abundance of wildlifefrom black bears, deer, and moose, to hawks, waterfowl, and songbirds.

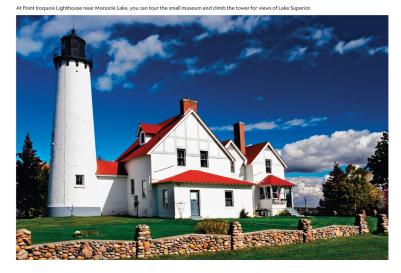
eep an eye out for black bears and white-tailed deer as you leave the fishing community of Brimley and head west on West Lakeshore Drive through forests of birch, maple, and oak scattered with pine. The drive passes through the Bay Mills Indian Reservation, arcing around South Pond. Tower Road, a 1-mile (1.6 km) detour on the left, leads to Spectacle $Lake\ Overlook\ with\ views\ of\ the\ glimmering\ lake,\ St.\ Marys\ River,\ and\ the\ Canadian\ shore\ in\ the$ distance. Back on the main road, West Lakeshore Drive becomes Lake Superior Shoreline Road after you enter Hiawatha National Forest—a short detour down a shady side road brings you to secluded Monocle Lake. The drive meanders through woods filled with wildflowers from spring through fall. So on you pass through the town of Dollar Settlement and the Big Pines Picnic Area on Whitefish Bay's19 miles (31 km) of sandy beach. The road dips between the bay and the forest, and winds along the base of Naomikong Point. Drive north on Mich. 123 before crossing the Tahquamenon River back to the bay's western shore. After the resort town of Paradise, head north along the narrow Whitefish Point town of Paradise, head north along the narrow of Paradise and ParadiRoad, which twists as you approach Whitefish Point Lighthouse and the nearby Whitefish Point BirdObservatory—a good place to view migrating hawks, waterfowl, and songbirds. Only a few miles from the Canadian shore, you may spot a moose along the lonely road. Beyond Grand Portage Indian Reservation you will find spectacular mountains, ridges, and peninsulas. The road climbs to a crest near $1,\!348\text{-}foot\,(411\,\mathrm{m})\,Mount\,Josephine, which\,juts\,into\,Lake\,Superior.\,From\,the\,escarpment, Lake\,Superior,$ Wauswaugoning Bay, the Susie Islands and, on a clear day, Michigan's Isle Royale, are all in view.

i EXCURSION I Once a camping, fishing, and hunting ground of the Chippewa Indians, Tahquamenon Falls State Park is a 10-mile (16 km) detour west on Mich. 125 from Paradise. The upper falls, at 200 feet (5 m) wide and with a 50-foot (15 m) drop, are the largest falls east of the Mississippi, and the lower falls are equally magnificent. There are also opportunities to hike, camp, fish, cance, spot wildlife, and hunt. The falls have been known to freeze

FROM: Brimley, Michigan To: Whitefish Point, Michigan ROADS: West Lakeshore Drive, Lake Superior Shoreline Road, Curley Lewis Highway, Mich. 123/Whitefish Road, Whitefish Point Road

DISTANCE: 54 miles (87 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 hours WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall PLANNING: National forest campgrounds are located at Monocle Lake and Bay View. michigan.gov/drive







ISLAND HOPPING IN WASHINGTON

 $Washington \, State's \, coast \, overflows \, with \, maritime \, culture \, and \, history. \, On \, this \, drive, \, visit \, drive,$ $decommissioned\ warships,\ national\ parks,\ and\ woodlands,\ and\ marvel\ at\ the\ plentiful$ $marine\ life\ dwelling\ close\ to\ the\ beaches,\ coves,\ and\ bays\ of\ the\ San\ Juan\ Islands.$



An orca leaps out of the water in one of the many channels between the San Juan Islands.

fter exploring the handsome and vibrant city of Seattle, take a ferry across Puget Sound to Bremerton. A tour boat takes you around Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, where you can see dozens of active warships and the decommissioned Mothball Fleet-including some old aircraft carriers (see Highlights). Back on land, Bremerton Naval Museum has artifacts, photos, and $models\ illustrating\ the\ history\ of\ the\ U.S.\ Navy.\ Continue\ north\ through\ Keyport,\ another\ naval\ town,$ before driving around Liberty Bay on Wash. 3 to Poulsbo, known for its Norwegian heritage. The old town teems with shops, cafés, and galleries, and at the Marine Science Center, you can handle sea cucumbers and sea anemones. Farther north, Port Gamble is home to the Of Sea and Shore Museum, which has a large collection of seashells and marine life on display. Cross Hood Canal on Wash. 104, then take U.S. 101 north before turning right onto Wash. 20. Soon you'll reach the waterfront town of Port Townsend, which has one of the best preserved and most extensive historic districts in the northwest, brimming with elaborate 19th-century buildings and pretty, pastel-colored Victorian homes. On the north side of the town are the 19th-century coastal gun-emplacements of Fort Worden State Park,the Puget Sound Coast Artillery Museum, and the Port Townsend Marine Science Center.

Take a ferry across the bay to Whidbey Island, where you'll dock below more historic gun-emplacements at Fort Casey State Park, before continuing on Wash. 20 to the small, but perfectly preserved, 19th-century town of Coupeville, with more than 50 structures on the National Register of Historic Places. Stop off to explore Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, which preserves small farms, woodlands, and beaches in a state that is relatively unchanged since the 19th century. Head north on Wash. 20, past Deception Pass State Park, Washington's most popular state park with 4,600 $\,$ acres (1,862 ha) of trails, beaches, and lakes. Continue across Fidalgo Island to the Anacortes Ferry, which takes you to Friday Harbor on the hilly, forested San Juan Islands (see Highlights). From here, you can book a whale-watching tour to see the orcas, seabirds, Steller sea lions, harbor porpoises, gray whales, and other marine life or visit San Juan Island National Historical Park (see Highlights).

OPPOSITE: Gnarled driftwood by the peaceful waters of Sharpe Bay in Deception Bay State Park

HIGHLIGHTS |

Visit the decommissioned destroyer, U.S.S. *Turner Joy*, at Bremerton. The 1959 vessel is still in its original condition, from the bridge to the closet-size barber shop.

The **San Juan Islands** are a great place to spot whales and orcas. A whale boat tour in May or June gives you a 90-percent chance of a sighting.

San Juan Island National Historical San Juan Island National Historical Park, known for its splendid vitas and quiet woodlands, is the site where Britain and the U.S.A. almost went to war over a dead pig in a border dispute in 1859.

FROM: Seattle, Washington To: Friday Harbor, Washington ROADS: Wash. 303, 3, 104, U.S. 101, Wash. 20, local roads DISTANCE: 88 miles (141 km) DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Orca-watching is best from May through June.





Purple lupines stand tall near Fossil Beach, the perfect place to while away some time hunting for fossils.

ALASKA I

TOUR KODIAK ISLAND

Zigzagging along the coast of Kodiak Island, this drive shows off deep bays, temperate rainforest, alpine meadows, rolling tundra, wildlife—including emperor geese, silver salmon, and bald eagles—and a dramatic shoreline pounded by waves and turbulent tides.

rom Kodiak, the former capital of Russian Alaska, head southwest on Rezanof Drive, which soon turns into Chiniak Highway. At Dead Man's Curve, enjoy the panorama of Kodiak Harbor, Chiniak Bay, and some of the archipelago's many islands. Turn left into Buskin River State Recreation Site to enjoy the most popular fishing spot on the island's road network, with big runs of sockeye and silver salmon, and bald eagles soaring overhead. A little farther on, take the turnoff for Anton Larsen $Bay\ Road, a\ spur\ leading\ past\ the\ island's\ golf\ course\ and\ along\ the\ western\ shore\ of\ the\ bay—a\ pretty$ $fjord\ with\ an\ island\ at\ its\ mouth.\ Back\ on\ the\ highway,\ you\ soon\ pass\ America's\ largest\ Coast\ Guard$ facility, with more than 1,000 employees. After this, the road skirts Womens Bay, which was once favored by Alutiiq women as a place to hunt, fish, and gather food. At the head of the bay, the highway crosses Sargent Creek, where emperor geese spend their winters, and the Russian River, where salmon gather to spawn in August and September. There is an abundance of wildlife here, and you may even see an eagle's nest among the cottonwood trees along Middle Bay. Around Mile 30, take the right fork, Pasagshak Bay Road, heading south, passing the Pacific Spaceport Complex, Alaska (not open to the $public), a \, state-of-the-art\, aerospace\, facility\, that\, launches\, commercial\, and\, military\, rockets.\, At\, the\, end\, commercial\, comme$ of the road you come to Fossil Beach, where fossilized seashells are nestled among the rocks. Retrace your route north to the junction. This time head east a little way along the shore of Chiniak Bay, watching for commercial fishing vessels coming and going from Kodiak. The bay supports 23 seabird $colonies\ in\ summer,\ so\ watch\ for\ Steller's\ eiders,\ yellow-billed\ loons,\ and\ hunting\ bald\ eagles.\ Turn$ around and head to the Olds River Inn, near the junction with Pasagshak Bay Road.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Fort Abercrombie State Historical Park, near Kodiak, is the remains of a World War II defense installation set in beautiful surroundings with steep.

in beautiful surroundings with steep surf-pounded cliffs, spruce forests, and wildflower meadows.

Whales are commonly sighted from the coast of Kodiak from April through November. Look out for fin, minke, sei, humpback, and gray whales from the cliffs along Chiniak Highway.

The **Alutiiq Museum** in Kodiak houses about 150,000 historical and archaeological artifacts—including weapons, jewelry, and fertility dolls—and is a great starting point for exploring the 7,500-year history of the native people of the island.

FROM: Kodiak, Alaska
TO: Fossil Beach, Alaska
ROADS: REAGNOF Dirive, Chiniak
Highway, Anton Larsen Bay
Road, Pasagshak Bay Road
DISTANCE: 85.6 miles (138 km)
DRIVING TIME: Time: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: Travelalaska.com



70 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

THE PACIFIC COAST SCENIC BYWAY

Drive past a lighthouse hailed as one of the most beautiful in the U.S., see the tumbling waves of Devils Churn, visit the incomparable Oregon dunes, and stop at waterfront cafés and restaurants where you can sample delicious local clam chowder.

ishing, crabbing, and clamming are popular pastimes in Pacific City, an oceanside village looking out over Chief Kiawanda Rock, while the dunes and beaches of nearby Bob Straub State Park offer solitude and beauty. From Pacific City, drive south and join U.S. 101, passing state parks with $head-turning\, scenery\, and\, wild life, including\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, whales\, off\, Yaquina\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\, gray\, brown\, pelicans\, near\, Siletz\, Bay\, and\,$ Head, Climb the 93-foot (28 m) high lighthouse at Yaquina Head for some splendid views, Farther on is the coastal city of Newport, home to the Oregon Coast Aquarium and the Hatfield Marine Science $Center.\ After\ crossing\ the\ Yachats\ River,\ stop\ at\ Cape\ Perpetua\ Scenic\ Area\ to\ see\ waves\ surging\ up\ the$ $narrow\, channel\, and\, exploding\, against\, the\, rocks\, at\, Devils\, Churn.\, From\, here, U.S.\, 101\, passes\, rocky\, shores\, contract the contract of the contrac$ and sandy beaches that are home to harbor seals. A mile (1.6 km) on from Heceta Head Lighthouse State Scenic Viewpoint is Sea Lion Caves, where a vast cavern houses a colony of raucous Steller sea lions. The road levels out as it enters Florence, with its waterfront of galleries, cafés, and shops. After you $cross\ the\ Siuslaw\ River,\ you\ enter\ Oregon\ Dunes\ National\ Recreation\ Area\ (see\ In\ Focus),\ stretching$ for 40 miles (64 km) along the coast. Soon after, you reach Siltcoos Recreation Corridor, an area with a broad, sandy beach and a trail following the wildlife-rich estuary of the Siltcoos River. The Oregon $\label{thm:continues} Dunes \, Overlook \, offers \, a \, striking \, vantage \, point. \, The \, road \, continues \, south \, to \, Gardiner, \, on \, the \, Umpqua \, and \, continues \, the \, continues \, contin$ River. From the larger town of Reedsport, across the river, continue down to Winchester Bay, where a detour brings you to the Umpqua Lighthouse, whose rotating beam flashes red and white. The drive continues through the coastal towns of North Bend and Coos Bay to picture-perfect Bandon.

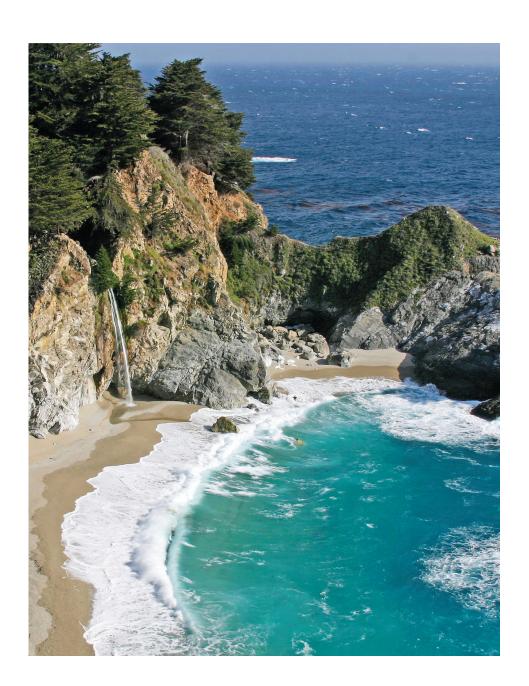
IN FOCUS Covering some 31,500 acres (12,748 ha), Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area is the largest expanse of coastal dunes in North America. Stretching from Florence to Coos Bay, it is a favorite destination for off-road driving, with ATVs racing up and down the sometimes 500-00c (152 m) high dunes. The area is a mix of small, forested islands, wetlands, forests, lakes, and open dunes, good for hiking, photography, camping, and horse-back ridinal.



FROM: Pacific City, Oregon
TO: Bandon, Oregon
ROAD: U.S. 101
DISTANCE: 168 miles (270 km)
DRIVING TIME: 4 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Oregon Dunes
Headquarters in Reedsport has
lots of information about the
dunes. visittheoregoncoast.com

Yaquina Head Lighthouse stands sentry before a calm sea and a cloud-strewn sky—it has been a working lighthouse since 1873





DRIVING BIG SUR

| CALIFORNIA |

An abundance of state parks, rugged coastlines lined with sandy beaches, majestic redwood $forests, so a ring\ waterfalls,\ and\ wild life\ such\ as\ sea\ otters,\ grey\ foxes,\ and\ peregrine\ falcons$ $a wait you on this {\it drive through the sparsely populated Big Sur region of central California}.$



An opulent guest bedroom at Hearst Castle, San Simeon

limbing 1,000 feet (305 m) above the sea, California's Big Sur coastal road passes some of the Golden State's most beautiful state parks. To reach the upscale village of Carmel-by-the-Sea, oin Calif. 1 from Monterey (see Highlights) and drive 3 miles (5 km) south. The town is home $to \, quaint, colorful \, cottages, restaurants, inns, shops, and \, art \, galleries \, set \, behind \, a \, broad, pine-tree-lined \, absolute \, behind \, absolute \, absolute \, behind \, absolute \, behind \, absolute \, a$ beach. Continue to the coves, headlands, meadows, and tide pools that make up Point Lobos State Natural Reserve. More than 250 different animal species have been seen at the park, including black $tailed\ deer\ and\ sea\ lions.\ After\ Carmel\ Highlands, with\ its\ impressive\ houses\ perched\ on\ granite\ cliffs,$ you reach the start of Big Sur-90 miles (145 km) of fabled coastline road to San Simeon. Redwood groves tower above as the Santa Lucia Range drops away until the jagged rocks meet the waves of the Pacific. One of the few easy-to-reach beaches on the drive is farther on at Garrapata State Park. Cross $the photographed \ Bix by \ Creek \ Bridge \ to \ reach \ Hurricane \ Point, where \ powerful \ winds \ sometimes \ swirlown \ Point, where \ powerful \ winds \ powerful \ winds \ powerful \ winds \ powerful \ winds \ powerful \$ above the Little Sur River. Soon after, you arrive at the 1889 Point Sur Light Station, a state historic park.

Drive on to Andrew Molera State Park, whose oak and redwood forests are accessible only on foot. Pass through the settlement of Big Sur to reach Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, where the Big Sur River runs through 964 acres (390 ha) of forested park. The sands and arched rocks of Pfeiffer Beach are about $1.5\ miles\ (2.4\ km)\ south,\ and\ a\ little\ farther\ on,\ the\ Henry\ Miller\ Memorial\ Library\ displays\ books\ and$ $memorabilia\ of\ the\ novelist,\ who\ spent\ 18\ years\ in\ Big\ Sur.\ Visit\ Julia\ Pfeiffer\ Burns\ State\ Park,\ 8\ miles$ (13 km) on, for an underwater preserve—perfect for scuba-diving enthusiasts—as well as the 80-foot $(24\ m)$ McWay Falls and 3,000-foot $(914\ m)$ high ridges. The road clings to the precipitous coastline $from\ here.\ After\ San\ Simeon-where\ you\ can\ catch\ a\ bus\ to\ the\ grand\ Hearst\ Castle\ (see\ Highlights)-here.$ continue to Cambria, where Monterey pines thrive on the hills. Head through the artists' colony of Harmony and past Estero Bay to reach Morro Bay, home to peregrine falcons. The easily identifiable Morro Rock towers over the bay.

OPPOSITE: A spring evening at McWay Falls in Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park

| HIGHLIGHTS |

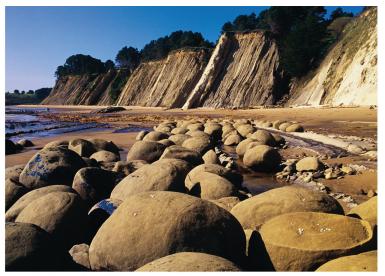
Monterey Bay Aquarium is well worth the pricey entrance fee—it houses a diverse range of marine life, including sea otters, sharks, penguins, numerous fish species, jellyfish, turtles, and octopuses.

Keep an eye out for **wild sea otters** feeding in kelp forests just offshore—they are protected along this stretch of coast. A good place to see them is at Soberanes Point near Garrapata State Park.

Hearst Castle in San Simeon is a 165-room mansion mixing classical and Mediterranean styles. Perched on a 127-acre (51 ha) estate in the Santa Lucia Range, it has striking views of Big Sur and the Pacific.

FROM: Monterey, California TO: Morro Bay, California ROAD: Calif. 1 DISTANCE: 123 miles (198 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Check in advance for bad weather, as heavy rain may make the narrow road dangerous. visitcalifornia.com





Boulders stud the California coastline near Point Arena.

| CALIFORNIA |

CALIFORNIA'S MIST-COVERED COAST

This trip along the jagged Pacific coast near Mendocino offers a window on American popular culture, as well as nature at its best: Beautiful state parks, delightful seaside communities, beaches, ferns, grasslands, and cypress groves all lie ahead.

efore you leave sprawling Santa Rosa, pay a visit to the Charles M. Schulz Museum that celebrates the "Peanuts" cartoonist. From here, drive west through the apple orchards of Sebastopol on Calif. 12, then join Calif. 1 and head north to the fishing village of Bodega Bay—the setting for Alfred Hitchcock's dark movie The Birds. Heading north, you soon pass the sands of Sonoma County State Park beach, an excellent stop for exploring tide pools or sunbathing. At the mouth of the Russian River, you'll see dramatic Goat Rock, looming on a beach where seals raise their cubs in spring, before the road climbs to nearly 1,000 feet (305 m) above the ocean. Continue north to Salt Point State Park, with easy-to-reach tide pools, a harbor seal colony, coastal hiking trails, and an underwater preserve at Gerstle Cove. The park has tan oaks, towering redwoods, and a pygmy tree forest. The northern edge is Kruse Rhododendron State Natural Reserve, where wild pink rhododendrons flower in late April and May. Beyond Gualala (pronounced wa-la-la) is Point Arena, a tiny settlement shared by fishermen and tie-dye-clad hippies. Continue to Van Damme State Park, where sea stars, anemones, and crabs occupy the tide pools. You can walk through a fern-edged river canyon and a forest of stunted pines and cypresses.

Back on the road, you soon come to Mendocino, a coastal village whose clapboard houses give it the look of a New England town. The former lumber town is now an artists' colony and the Mendocino Art Center has collections of local paintings, wearings, examises, and photography. Surrounding the town is Mendocino Headlands State Park, which preserves sandstone bluffs, wavetunnels, tide pools, beaches, and grasslands. Farther north are the redwoods, ferns, and wild ginger of Russian Gulch State Park, in the midst of which is a 36-foot (11 m) high waterfall. After sampling the fresh seafood in the harbor town of Noyo, continue to Fort Bragg, a military post, to ride the Skunk Train along the scenic Redwood Route.

FROM: Santa Rosa, California
TO: Fort Bragg, California
ROADS: Calif. 12, 1
DISTANCE: 130 miles (209 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round



THE WINDING ROAD TO HANA

This zigzagging highway, which leads to the isolated settlement of Hana, passes cascading waterfalls, dense rainforest, and rugged lava coastlines. Along the way, you'll cross 56 bridges and go around 617 twists and turns.

he road leaving Kahului Airport is deceptively flat as you head east on Hana Highway, passing sugarcane fields and the sandy sweep of Baldwin Beach Park. Pā'ia, a former plantation, is the only major town on the drive to Hana. Windsurf $ers \, and \, surfers \, congregate \, here, just \, 2 \, miles \, (3 \, km) \, from \, Hookipa \, Beach \, Park, \, a \, pilgrimage \, and \, properties and \, properties are congregated by the properties of the properties o$ site for both sports. After about 20 minutes of driving, the twists, turns, and bridges begin. Each bridge has been given a name, such as Kolea, which means "Happiness that comes on the wind." Look out for rainbow eucalyptus (trees with colorfully streaked bark) and stop to pick up roadside guava, mountain apples, and mangoes between the tiny towns of Huelo and Kailua. Soon the road reaches $Waik a moi, one of several \ waterfalls \ along \ the \ route. \ Scenes \ from \ Jurassic \ Park \ were \ shot \ at \ the \ nearby$ Garden of Eden Arboretum & Botanical Garden, which is home to Puohokamoa Falls and more than $500\,species\,of\,plants.\,Beyond\,is\,the\,Kaumahina\,State\,Wayside\,Park, with\,breathtaking\,coastline\,views.$ After stopping at Haipua'ena Falls, you come to the Hawaiian ethnobotanical gardens at the Ke'anae Arboretum, a good place to picnic and swim. From here, drive down to the Ke'anae Peninsula to see meadows of taro—a widely cultivated tropical plant and Hawaii's traditional food crop. Back on Hana Highway, continue past overlooks with splendid photo opportunities, and pause at Waikani Falls, a $sequence\ of\ three\ pretty\ cascades.\ The\ next\ stop\ is\ Wai\'anapanapa\ State\ Park,\ which\ show cases\ a\ fine\ pretty\ pretty$ $lava\,shoreline\,with\,black\,craggy\,cliffs, sea\,stacks, lava\,caves\,and\,tubes, and\,a\,gleaming\,black\,sand\,beach.$ From here, the road winds down to Hana.

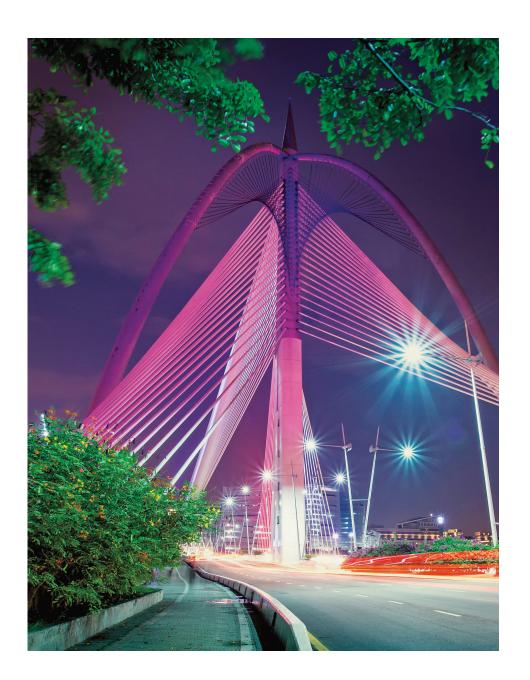
EXCURSION To reach the old whaling town of Lahaina from Kahului Airport, drive southwest on Hwy, 380, then west on Hwy, 30. The historical museum offers details about those who have made their mark on the island, including Christian missionaries, whalers, and Chinese and Japanese migrants. The town is a center for whalewatching, and organized tours run from the harbor. In addition to galleries, the town's banyan tree is a must-see as it's the largest tree in the U.S.A.



FROM: Kahului Airport, Hawaii To: Hana, Hawaii ROAD: Hana Highway DISTANCE: 53 miles (85 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Pã'ai is the last opportunity to buy gas before Hana. hanamaul.com

A surfer rides a mighty wave at Hookipa Beach Park, near Pā'ia.





1 THE LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN CAUSEWAY, LOUISIANA

Driving onto this languorous double causeway on I-10 as it reaches out across Lake Pontchartrain, you could be forgiven for thinking you're heading out to sea. In fact, the lake is a saltwater estuary on the Gulf of Mexico, and seagoing ships pass beneath. The two parallel causeways stretch for almost 24 miles (39 km).

PLANNING: A toll of \$5 is taken at the northern terminus, Mandeville, thecauseway.us

2 AKASHI KAIKYO BRIDGE, KOBE-AWAJI ISLAND, JAPAN

Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, the world's longest suspension bridge, has cables that would go seven times around the world. It carries the Honshu-Shikoku highway linking Kobe to Awaji island. The bridge was built in part as a response to a ferry disaster, and crosses the perilous Akashi Strait, withstanding strong currents and high winds, not to mention earthquakes.

PLANNING: At night, the bridge's lights change color every 15 minutes. The Maiko Marine Promenade on the Kobe side of the bridge has an observation lounge and information about the bridge. *jnto.go.jp*

3 HANGZHOU BAY BRIDGE, SHANGHAI-NINGBO, CHINA

This is China's most impressive bridge, a 22-mile (35 km) elongated 5 shape that whips across the water with six lanes in each direction. The expansive inlet of the South China Sea is a fascinating phenomenon, with enormous waves and tides that can race in at speeds of up to 20 miles

(32 km) an hour. There are plans to con-

struct an artificial island halfway across the bridge, which will include a viewing tower. PLANNING: Don't slow down or stop to admire the view, or you will face a fine. The toll is 80 Yuan. hangshoubsybridge.com

4 THE GREAT BELT FIXED LINK, FUNEN-ZEALAND, DENMARK

The Great Belt−a major water channel between the North Sea and the Baltic—cuts Denmark in two. This bridge unites the country, allowing you to drive from the European continent to Copenhagen and on across the Øresond Bridge to Sweden. The bridge is in two parts: the

10

SPECTACULAR BRIDGES

As well as providing unrivaled views, these impressive feats of engineering across the world link places that once seemed irrevocably separate.

western section runs alongside a railway, the eastern section is a majestic suspension bridge.

PLANNING: Paying the 35-euro toll gets you discounts on thousands of goods and services in Denmark. *storebaelt.dk*

5 LE VIADUC DE MILLAU, TARN VALLEY, FRANCE

This bridge is such a vision of grace and beauty that people come from far and wide just for the pleasure of driving over it. But you need a head for heights: It's the tallest bridge in the world. Sailing high above the Tarn valley, it takes the AZS from Paris through the Massif Central to southern France and Spain.

PLANNING: There is a viaduct information center at Aire des Cazalous on the RD92 toward Albi. leviaducdemillau.com

6 EVERGREEN POINT FLOATING BRIDGE, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

The world's longest floating bridge is nearly 15 miles (24 km) long, linking Downtown Seattle with the city's Eastside suburbs across Lake Washington. Built because the depth of the lake and its soft silt bed make more conventional bridges impractical, it was opened in 2016.

PLANNING: Tolls are collected in both direction wsdot.wa.gov/Tolling/520/default.htm

OPPOSITE: The super-stylish Seri Wawasan Bridge at Putrajaya, near Kuala Lumpur, looks good by day but even better when illuminated at night.

7 OCTÁVIO FRIAS DE OLIVEIRA BRIDGE, SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

Spanning the Pinheiros River in São Paulo, the Ponte Estaiada—as it is known locally—has become one of the city's most striking landmarks. It is the only bridge in the world with two curved roadways, one above the other, supported by cables coming from a single concrete tower. From above, the roadways form an X-shape.

PLANNING: Over Christmas and New Year, multicolored LED lamps give it the look of a giant Christmas tree at night. visitbrasil.com/ destinations/sao-paulo.html

8 SIDU RIVER BRIDGE, HUBEI, CHINA

This suspension bridge stretches dramatically from mountaintop to mountaintop across a 1600-foot (500 m) deep valley in central China's rugged Hubei province. It is among several engineering marvels along the portion of the east-west GSO Huyu (Shanghai-Chongqing) Expressway.

PLANNING: You need a three-month temporary permit to drive in China. travelchinaguide.com/ cityquides/huhei

9 SERI WAWASAN BRIDGE, PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA

With a slanting tower supporting its roadway, the beautiful cable-stayed Seri Wawasan Bridge has the look of a sail floating over the artificial lake that snakes through Malaysia's federal capital. The 315-foot (96 m) pylon is shaped like an upside-down Y, with cables running down to either side of the roadway.

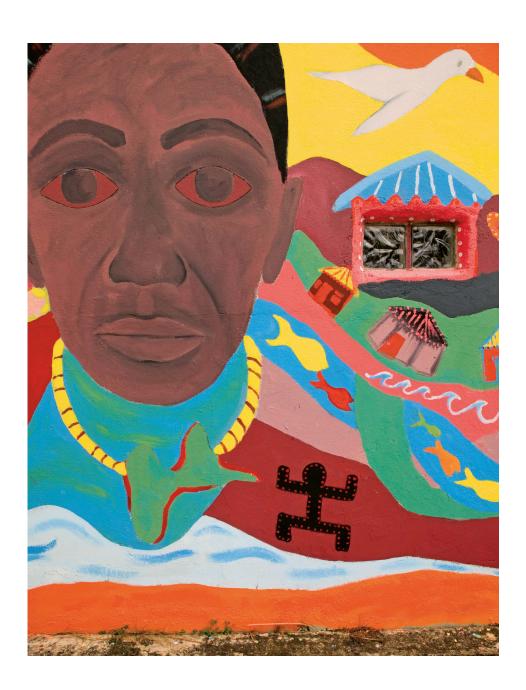
PLANNING: Drive across the bridge by night, when it is illuminated. malaysia.travel/en/ay/places/states-of-malaysia/putrajaya#page1

10 SUNNIBERG BRIDGE,

SWITZERLAND

Remarkable for its simple grace, the bridge blends with the unspoiled Alpine Landquart River valley near the resort of Klosters. It is a cable-stayed bridge suspended from four pylons that lean outward slightly, allowing them to be less obtrusive than is usual with such bridges.

PLANNING: You may also want to drive down into the valley beneath to admire it from below. davos.ch/en/davos-klosters/portrait-image/story telling/architecture



GUADELOUPE |

NORTHERN BASSE-TERRE

Tracing the northern half of one of Guadeloupe's butterfly-wing-shaped coasts, this route passes through a spectacular rainforest of hardwood and fern, winds between mountain peaks, dips down to fine beaches, and takes in regional museums along the way.



The cobalt-blue bay of Deshaies is framed by hills covered in tropical vegetation and flowers.

he busy main city of Grande-Terre, Pointe-à-Pitre is the starting point for a delightful tour of one of the Caribbean's Jushest forests. Follow signs for Basse-Terre west across the Rivière Salée, and go south on Rte. NI to the exit for the Route de la Traversée (Rte. D.23). The road heads west through cane fields before ascending into the rainforest of giant mahogany, bamboo, and gum trees that populates the Parc National de la Guadeloupe. On the way, you can stop for a two-minute walk to the Cascade aux Écrevisses, a popular waterfall edged by dripping mosses and creepers. The nearby Maison de la Forêt provides an excellent introduction to the 74,000-acre (30,000-ha) park, with exhibits (in French only) explaining the area's flora, fauna, and geology. Hiking maps lay out the 190 miles (306 km) of well-maintained trekking routes, including the challenging Trace des Crêtes, which follows the mountain ridge above the west coast.

The road then traverses the Col des Mamelles, a high pass between two volcano peaks. From its highest point—1,922 feet (586 m)—the road offers great views of the park (when it is not obscured by frequent rain) and then makes a hairpin descent to the coast at Mahaut. Take a short detour south to Plage de Malendure, where glass-bottomed boats depart for trips around the tiny flets Pigeon. Named for the French naturalist Jacques Cousteau, the Reserve du Commandant Cousteau is on these islets and harbors a marine world of coral and brilliant fish. Continue north on Rte. N2 to the Maison du Cacao, which explains the history, cultivation, and manufacture of cocoa and sells pure blocks of the rich treat. The drive continues past the attractive fishing village of Deshaies, with its pretty botanical garden. Just over a mile 2 km Jarther on, through a screen of glossy mangrowe trees, you'll catch your first glimpse of the broad bay at Grande Anse, lined by Guadeloupe's finest beaches. Here, the sweep of the forest meets the curving golden sands, shaded by palm trees and edged with volcanic rock. The road now rounds the tip of the island and continues on to Sainte-Rose (see Highlights). On the main road once more, it's a quick run back to Pointe-à-Pitre.

OPPOSITE: A colorful, larger-than-life mural brightens a wall in Deshaies.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Stop near Pointe-Noire, north of Mahaut, to visit the Maison du Bois (House of Wood), which has boat-building and furniture-making displays. The museum has built up an impressive collection of antique wooden tools and utensils, including hand whisks, coffee grinders, and cassava-root crushers.

The **Musée du Rhum** in Sainte-Rose is devoted to a private rum-making enterprise and has historic artifacts such as an enormous cane-juice vat hewn from a single tree trunk. After watching the short film foome English showings), take a tour of the adjacent Distillerie Reimoneng to taste and buy the flery liquor.

FROM: Loop route from Pointeà-Pitre, Guadeloupe ROADS: Rtes. NI, D23, N2 DISTANCE: 93 miles (149 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 hours WHEN TO 60: Year-round PLANNING: Expect rainfall at any time of year, but especially in the wet season, July through November.



CUBAN COASTS AND MOUNTAINS

This lonely yet scenic road threads along the edge of the stark, low-desert coastal strip beneath the towering Sierra Maestra mountains. As you travel westward, the sweeping vistas become even more dramatic.

rom historic Santiago de Cuba, make your way westward to the coastal Playa

Mar Verde—a popular beach with locals—by following Hwy. 20. Aserradero,
where the guns of the Spanish warship Viscaya still poke above the surf, is 13 miles

(21 km) beyond. It was sunk by U.S. warships in 1898 in a fateful attempt by the Spanish fleet to break out of Santiago harbor during the Spanish-American War. Mountains to the north rise promently above the broad coastal plain. A turnoff to the right, about 8 miles (33 km) west of Aserradero, will lead you up into the mountains to Cruce de los Baños, although a 4WD is recommended for this rugged detour. Return to the main road, which begins to rise and fall between headlands that widen with the miles and which passes beaches of variegated colors. The scenery becomes more stupendous as copper-colored cliffs loom over the sea and the mountains fall away to the shore. Uvero, one of the few rustic communities along the way, is the site of an early battle won by Fidel Castro's revolutionaries in 1957. Cuba's highest point, the 6,477-foot (1,974 m) Pico Turquino, seems almost within reach, while other lushly forested peaks ahead belie the fact that it rains little here. At Las Cuevas, you pass the trailhead to Pico Turquino. Goats and buzzards are your only company as you navigate sharp curves and steep changes in elevation that seem to leave you suspended in the air for a moment before falling steeply into a valley. At last you arrive at Marea del Portillo, known for its beaches of dark sand and excellent diving.

I HIDDEN HISTORY | Around 105 miles (170 km) from Santlago de Cuba on the island's north coast is Baracos. The isolated settlement of narrow streets, surrounded by mountains and rainforests, flings to a traditional lifestyle. Founded in 1512, it is the dielect scolanial city in the Americas, and its historic buildings include the Fuerte Matachin, a preserved fort now home to the Museo Municipal de Historia, which traces the region's history from pre-Columbian days.

FROM: Santiago de Cuba, Cuba TO: Marea del Portillo, Cuba ROAD: Hwy. 20 DISTANCE: 100 miles (160 km) DRIVING TIME: 4 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: The road is subject to closure due to periodic landslides. If you intend to stay in Marea del Portillo, bring cash as there are no banks in the area.

cubatravel.cu

Palm trees dominate the landscape near Pico Turquino, in Cuba's Sierra Maestra.





A pleasure boat glides over Hakone Lake's still waters in front of snowcapped Mount Fuji, framed by the lake's forested shore.

JAPAN

IN THE SHADOW OF MOUNT FUJI

A drive through Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park brings shifting views of Japan's most famous peak, an exhilarating landscape of flower-clad mountains, lakes, and shoreline, and the chance to dip into relaxing and healthful hot springs.

rom the unabashedly touristy resort of Hakone, whose art museum is noted for its ceramics, head south on Rte. I. Catch glimpses of graceful Mount Fuji, Japan's highest mountain, as you follow Rte. I for about 5 miles (8 km), and then hop off the highway at Lake Ashino Ko, which is also known as Hakone Lake, and see the peak reflected in its calm waters. Pause at the historic Hakone Checkpoint, built in 1619 to monitor travelers between Tokyo and Kyoto. The old Edo structures at the checkpoint have been beautifully restored. Continue on Rte. I asit winds uphill and down, and continue southwest a further 6.5 miles (10 km), crossing over the E70 expressway into the city of Mishima. Here, take the turnoff to Rte. 136—the Shimoda Highway—which continues through the Izu Peninsula's rolling hills and ocean views. It turns briefly into Rte. 414 at Takyo, then just south of Hontachino, take Rte. 414 again, passing through Izu City with its lovely riverside location. Farther south, on the tip of the Izu Peninsula, sits the quiet little town of Minami-Izu, known for its hot springs and nearby beautiful beaches. The Ikona Ryokan and Spa is a perfect place to end the journey, with a soak in an outdoor bath and a full-course Japanese meal.

IN FOCUS Begin the drive slightly further northwest to visit the Hakone Open-Air Museum on Rte. 732. Built in 1999 to integrate art and nature, its 120-piece collection includes a star-shaped maze you can get lost in, a rotating display of works by British sculptor Henry Moore, who fittingly said, "Sculpture is an art of the open air," and more than 300 pottery pieces, paintings, prints, and objects by Pablo Picasso.

FROM: Hakone, Japan
TO: Izu Peninsula, Japan
ROADS: Rtes. 1, 136, 414
DISTANCE: 65 miles (104 km)
DRIVING TIME: 5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: jnto.go.jp



BY SEA & SHORE | 81

HENGCHUN PENINSULA

Reach Taiwan's southernmost point, and view the mighty expanse of the Pacific Ocean from the edge of the island's most scenic park, pausing to see intriguing rock formations and ecological curiosities, and to walk along low, sweeping cliffs of coral.

tart at Kenting National Park Headquarters and Visitor Center, with its displays on local topography, corals, flora, and fauna. Head southeast along Provincial Hwy. 26, through the town of Kenting, passing the prominent Frog Rock, and on to Kenting Beach. This golden-sand beach, popular with jet-skiers, sits at the bottom of a small bluff, and you can hire snorkeling gear to explore the corals offshore. Continue along the highway for 0.5 mile (800 m) and you will pass 60-foot (18 m) Sail Rock, which marks the start of the Tropical Coastal Forest—I mile (1.6 km) of woodland with more than 180 plant species growing from coral beds. Several miles farther along lies Shadao, Taiwan's prettiest beach, its sparkling sands made up of seashell and coral fragments and protected from human activity. A little farther south leads to Eluanbi Park at the tip of the Hengchun Peninsula, where the Bashih Channel meets the Pacific. Here monsoon forest combines with shrubs and vines growing atop walls of coral, and superb coastline views appear. You can walk down to the southernmost tip of Taiwan, where one of the world's few fortified lighthouses stands. Nicknamed "The Light of East Asia," it is one of the most powerful lighthouses in the region.

The road begins climbing north through grasslands, leading to Longpan Park. Stop here and head for the coral cliffs for more sweeping views of the Pacific. The road dips inland through pastureland before veering back to the coast a bit farther on at Fongchueisha, noted for its phenomenal shifting ands, swept down to the coast by summer rains. The highway reveals splendid ocean panoramas as it follows the coastline, occasionally dipping down to sea level, before crossing the Gangkou River. Turn right at the T-junction and drive 1.4 miles (2.2 km) to reach Jialeshuei Scenic Area, with wind-and-wave-sculpted honeycomb rocks running along the coast. Follow the path past these weird formations to reach Shanhaipu, or Mountain-Sea Falls, where water tumbles over a cliff into the Pacific. From Jialeshuei, backtrack along the coast or head inland along Country Rte. 200 from Gangkou. This second route passes through rice fields and palm groves to Hengchun, the main town on the peninsula.

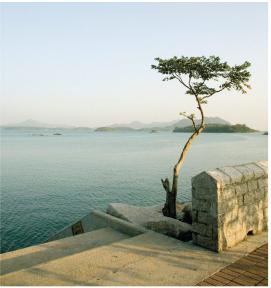


FROM: Kenting National Park Headquarters, Taiwan To: Jialeshuel or Hengchun, Taiwan ROADS: Provincial Hwy. 26, Country Rte. 200 DISTANCE: 17.5 miles (28 km) TIME: 1 hour WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Take care near cliffs during the monsoon season (June-October), when winds and seas are high. Keep to designated trails, and beware of venomous snakes. taiwan.net.tw

Sail Rock on the Hengchun Peninsula is also called Nixon Rock, as it's said to resemble the profile of the late U.S. president







The islands off Sai Kung Peninsula, seen from the coast, seem to hover on the horizon.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

The Sai Kung Country Park Visitor Centre has a small but entertaining museum that describes the park's geography, flora, and fauna, as well as traditional village and rural life.

Both Sai Kung West and Sai Kung East Country Parks are ideal for camping, hiking, and enjoying nature. Seasoned hikers can sample the scenic Maclehose Trail that runs through the parks.

Take a taxi or the 94 bus along the steep, forested road that leads to steep, forested road that leads to Wong Shek Pier. The top deck of the bus gives the best views of the peaks that dominate the park. At the pier, you can rent sailboards and dinghies, jump on a ferry to view the shoreline, walk along the waterfront, or just relax at the water's edge.

HONG KONG'S COUNTRY PARK

This short drive to delightful Sai Kung Country Park takes you along the jagged coast of the New Territories in Hong Kong. En route lies the fishing town of Sai Kung, where you can savor the views of its sheltered, island-dotted bay, as tranquil as a Chinese painting.

he green, looming peak of Ma On Shan dominates the view as you leave Kowloon behind and turn left from Clear Water Bay Road onto Hiram's Highway. The road winds its way to Marina Cove, where hundreds of villas are wrapped around the marina. The road opens up to views of $Pak\,Sha\,Wan, also\,called\,Hebe\,Haven, 1.2\,miles\,(2\,km)\,farther\,on.\,Dozens\,of\,small\,pleasure\,craft\,shelter$ in the scenic bay, which is almost completely enclosed by a narrow, curved peninsula. The highway meanders past villages, wooded areas, and garden nurseries for another 1.8 miles (3 km) to reach Sai Kung. The old fishing town is known for its fine seafood, and a popular local pastime is to hire a sampan and catch your own cuttlefish. The road name briefly changes to Po Tung Road, before becoming Tai $Mong\ Tsai\ Road\ and\ heading\ past\ the\ town\ to\ a\ small\ beach\ with\ waterside\ restaurants.\ From\ here,$ it hugs the contours of Inner Port Shelter, offering sea glimpses through the eucalyptus trees and grassy picnic areas lining the bay. You can see numerous small islets and the larger Sharp Island $and \, Kau \, Sai \, Chau \, as \, the \, road \, undulates \, along \, the \, most \, scenic \, part \, of \, the \, route. \, Along \, this \, stretch,$ an obelisk—the Sai Kung Memorial—stands as tribute to the villagers and guerrillas who died under Japanese occupation from 1941 to 1945. Leave your car at the entrance to Sai Kung Country Park, and continue by taxi or bus for a 20-minute drive to Wong Shek Pier (see Highlights). To return to Kowloon, either retrace your steps or take Sai Sha Road, with occasional sweeping panoramas of Three Fathoms Cove and Tolo Harbour, before coming to the new town of Ma On Shan with its excellent shopping.

FROM: Kowloon, China To: Wong Shek, China ROADS: Hiram's Highway, Po Tung, Tai Mong Tsai, Sai Sha roads

DISTANCE: 10.5 miles (17 km)
DRIVING TIME: 45 minutes WHEN TO GO: Year-round

PLANNING: Sai Kung's beaches can get crowded on weekends. Avoid driving in the typhoon season, roughly May-November, when the roads are often flooded. travelinsaikung.org.hk



ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

AUSTRALIA |

GREAT OCEAN ROAD

Built in memory of those who served in World War I, the Great Ocean Road in Victoria remains Australia's finest coastal drive, skirting endless sandy beaches, rugged cliffs, and pretty fishing ports, all set against the forested Otway Ranges.



Limestone stacks, called the Twelve Apostles, punctuate the rocky headlands of Victoria's coast

rom Melhourne's twinkling towers two routes take you to the Great Ocean Road (B100), which officially starts from the old vacation town of Torquay. The quick, but less scenic, route leads via the Princes Freeway (M1) southwest to Geelong. You can stop off at the National Wool Museum and at Narana Creations, an Aboriginal cultural and tourism center displaying arts and crafts. From Geelong, follow the Surfcoast Highway (B100) to Torquay. The alternative is to take the Nepean Highway (A3) south from Melbourne along the busy flank of Port Phillip Bay. The pleasant, leafy town of Mount Eliza marks the end of suburbanization as you enter a favorite vacation area for Melburnians, with bayside beaches overlooked by leafy peaks. Dromana is a popular town, and there are some great views from the nearby 1,000-foot (305 m) granite outcrop in Arthur's Seat State Park. Cape Schanck features some of the best beach walks, including an 18-mile (29 km) trail through Mornington Peninsula National Park toward delightful Portsea, in the toe of the peninsula. Be aware, however. Although the beaches here are beautiful, the sea's strong currents make swimming dangerous.

From Portsea, take the ferry across the mouth of Port Phillip Bay to the old maritime town of Queenscliff. This pretty bayside settlement used to be a naval garrison, but after the arrival of the railway in 1879,

I SURFING ON BELLS BEACH I Bells Beach near Torquay is one of the world's most renowned surfing beaches, loved for its reliable waves that regularly swell up to 12-feet (3.7 m) high. Although people had long known about the great surf, they could not manage the scramble down to the isolated beach carrying heavy boards; the introduction of lightweight boards in the 1950s made reaching the beach easier. The accessibility problem was finally rectified when surfer Joe Sweeny buildozed a road. Since then, the beach has taken its place in surfing history, hosting an international event every Easter. The beach has a laken its place in surfing history, hosting an international event every Easter.

THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD WINDS PAST STUNNING COASTAL SCENERY. DON'T MISS THE TWELVE APOSTLES, WHERE THE SEA CRASHES WITH AMAZING FORCE AGAINST THE GIGANTIC ROCK FORMATIONS.

-ANNIE GRIFFITHS

National Geographic photographer

it became popular for its yachting and sea breezes. Torquay is a short drive from here, via Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads along C121 and the Surfcoast Highway.

Surf conditions are almost perfect along this part of the coast—Bells Beach is a prime example—and Torquay's Surfworld displays many exhibits and artifacts including old and rare surfboards. The road briefly heads inland, meeting the sea again at Anglesae, where you can go horseback riding along the beach. Farther along, you pass through Lorne, long popular with surfers and bushwalkers, and from here you can scramble up the ranges to see the Erskine Falls and spectacular views of the coast.

A most dramatic section of the route lies up ahead, twisting for 25 miles (40 km) to Apollo Bay, winding around steep cliffs and narrow inlets. There are plenty of lookouts so you can keep your eyes on this extremely curvy road but not miss out on the scenery. The Great Ocean Walk,



a 57-mile (92 km) trail along the Victoria coastline, begins from here.

After Apollo Bay, the road climbs inland again, entering the Otway Ranges. These steep mountains, clad in rainforest, offer views of the ocean and the rolling green hills behind. About 12 miles (19 km) on from the bay, take a left on a winding dirt track to Cape Otway lighthouse. It was built from local sandstone by convicts in 1848, and the light has never broken down. Back on the road, you run past the small but lovely Melba Gully State Park, with its luxuriant ferns, dense rainforests, and eerie evening displays of glowworms, and on through the old timber town of Lavers Hill before returning to the ocean at Princetown.

The highway traverses Port Campbell National Park, which has the most spectacular coastline of the whole trip. A series of rock pillars, known as the Twelve Apostles, rises more than 200 feet (60 m) out of the sea. Frequent pull-offs enable you to enjoy views of these striking formations from several angles.

The Great Ocean Road ends where it joins the Princes Highway (A1), east of the old whaling town of Warrnambool (see Highlights). Southern right whales, which use the shallows here as a nursery in winter months, are a popular attraction. They often swim very close to the shore. From Warrnambool, the Princes Highway takes you back to Melbourne.



A koala poses in Otway National Park, which also has wallabies, echidnas, and rich birdlife.

FROM: Melbourne, Australia TO: Warrnambool, Australia ROADS: Princes Fwy. (M1), Nepean Hwy. (A3), C12, Surfcoast Hwy. (B100), Great Ocean Road (B100), Princes Hwy. (A1)

DISTANCE: 260 miles (418 km)
DRIVING TIME: 12 hours

WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: The Rip Curl Pro, one of the
world's premier surfing events, is held on
Bells Beach near Torquay each year, and
Lorne can get extremely busy. Be sure to
book places to stay well in advance.
greatocearnd.org.au

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Warrnambool's days as a whaling station are remembered at Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum, based around the lighthouse-keeper's cottage, the lighthouse, and the fortifications built in 1887 to fuward russian invaders. It includes a stunning sound and laser show called "Shipwrecked," about the wreck of the clipper Loch Ard in 1878.

Just outside Winchelsea on the way back to Melbourne on the Princes Highway, stop at Barwon Park (open Sundays and Wednesdays), one of Australia's grandest mansions. Its 42 rooms have their original Victorian interiors, including an exquisite cedar staircase.



The Lookout at Byron Bay boasts panoramic ocean views and the prospect of great surfing.

| AUSTRALIA |

PACIFIC HIGHWAY

The Pacific Highway in New South Wales runs north from the regional capital of Sydney to the tropical resort of Byron Bay, bringing an eclectic mix of seaside adventure, with rainforest, mountains, organic farms, tourist kitsch, and empty beaches.

ross the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge on Rte. 1, and the first big settlement you reach, after about 100 miles (160 km), is the industrial city of Newcastle. Despite the smokestacks on the outskirts, this is a breezy surfing town with wide, leafy streets and some fine art deco architecture. Follow the road inland and make a detour to Barrington Tops National Park (left onto Rte. $15\,after\,New castle, and\,turn\,north\,at\,Maitland\,to\,Dungog), through\,temperate\,rainforest\,and\,mile-high$ plateaus dotted with snow gums and covered with alpine bogs. Head back onto Rte. 1, and in the bushland around Port Stephens you just might spot a wild koala bear (see Highlights). The next stop is Port Macquarie, popular for its plethora of water sports, wine ries, theme parks, and many fine, convict-built, and the parks of the parks $historic \ buildings. \ Travelon\ 90\ miles\ (145\ km)\ and\ turn\ off for\ the\ laid-back\ village\ of\ Bellingen, 7\ miles$ (11 km) up Rte. 78. At the base of a 1,000-foot (305 m) escarpment and surrounded by rainforest, the village is home to writers, craftspeople, and artists, who have flocked here to escape the city. Another more hair-raising 20 miles (32 km) along Rte. 78 to Dorrigo brings you to the eponymous national park—one of Australia's finest. Return to Rte. 1 via Bellingen or Coramba. You will begin to feel the warmer climate as you reach Coffs Harbour and see the banana plantations clinging to mountainsides that plunge down to the coast (see Highlights). The highway drifts inland now before reaching the genteel country town of Grafton, known for the colors produced by its jacaranda and flametrees in $spring\ (November).\ Finally,\ at\ Byron\ Bay,\ you\ find\ the\ most\ popular\ resort\ town\ on\ the\ Pacific\ coast,$ with organic markets, galleries, and folk music, and whale-watching in June and July.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Should you miss out on gilmpsing a koala in the wild, visit Port Macquarie Koala Hospital. On the grounds of a historic homestead, hundreds of sick and injured animals are regularly treated. Visitors are welcome all day, and a "feed, walk, and talk" chur starts at 3 p.m., during which a staff member explains the history of each injured koala while others are fed.

The **Big Banana** in Coffs Harbour is a theme park dedicated to the area's most prolific crop. You can tour a banana plantation, buy a smoothie, or learn about the fruit's history in the World of Bananas. Alternatively, just enjoy the attractions offered, including a water park, tobogganing, and ice skating.

FROM: Sydney, Australia To: Byron Bay, Australia RoAos: Rtes. 1, 15, 78 DISTANCE: 520 miles (837 km) DRIVING TIME: 11 hours WHEN TO 60: Year-round PLANNING: Take great care driving—stretches of road are not divided and head-on collisions do occur. The back road through Barrington Tops National Park is not paved.



NEW ZEALAND

COAST ROAD

 $Rudy ard\ Kipling\ described\ New\ Zeal and\ as\ ``last,\ lone liest,\ love liest,\ exquisite,\ apart,"$ a fitting description of this 336-mile (540 km) long drive hedged-in by sea and mountains, $where \, subtropical \, rain forests \, grow \, at \, the \, feet \, of \, glistening \, glaciers.$

rom the South Island town of Karamea, surrounded by the high plateaus and coastal forests of Kahurangi National Park, head south on the Karamea Highway (Hwy. 67), which winds lazily through peaceful green hills. After crossing the Mokihinui River, the road hugs the coast to the small town of Waimangaroa, where signs lead up the hill to Denniston, an abandoned mining town famous for its old steep railroad that shipped coal down the hill. Back on the main road, continue south to Westport and take a short detour to Cape Foul Wind (named by Captain Cook in 1770), along Hwy. $67A, to see the seal colony and lighthouse. Return to the main road and after about 1.5\,miles (3\,km)\,turn$ $right \, (west) \, onto \, Hwy. \, 6, which \, meanders \, 63 \, miles \, (102 \, km) \, to \, Greymouth, \, the \, largest \, city \, on \, the \, coast.$ On the way, visit the spectacular rocks and blowholes at Punakaiki. Greymouth has a long gold-mining history, commemorated in Shantytown, a reconstructed 1880s gold-rush town, just 3.5 miles $(6~\mathrm{km})~\mathrm{south}~\mathrm{of}~\mathrm{the}~\mathrm{city}.~\mathrm{Hokitika}, 30~\mathrm{minutes}~\mathrm{away}~\mathrm{on}~\mathrm{Hwy}.~\mathrm{6}, \mathrm{is}~\mathrm{in}~\mathrm{greenstone}~\mathrm{country}, \mathrm{with}~\mathrm{galleries}$ selling fine jewelry made from local nephrite jade.

Continue south past a series of lakes that offer conservation sanctuaries and sightings of native birds, in particular keas (alpine parrots), wekas, the great white egrets, and even the shy kiwi. The road cuts through more green hills as it approaches the town of Franz Josef, with its good range of restaurants and places to stay. A walk to the terminal of the Franz Josef Glacier takes about 10 minutes from the parking area, while Fox Glacier is a short drive south. Both glaciers have walking tours and tracks, but a helicopter flight is the most spectacular way to see these relics of the ice age. Continue under the gaze of Mount Cook and Mount Tasman, two of New Zealand's highest peaks. South of Fox River there are $more\ coastal\ views\ before\ the\ road\ turns\ inland\ to\ pass\ Lakes\ Moeraki\ and\ Paringa,\ both\ outstanding$ for their natural beauty and wildlife. At the coast are colonies of fur seal and the vellow-crested Fiordland penguin, which can be viewed by tours from Lake Moeraki Lodge. The long, one-lane bridge over the Haast River leads into Haast, a frontier town at the center of a pristine wilderned



FROM: Karamea, New Zealand To: Haast, New Zealand ROADS: Hwys. 67, 67A, 6 DISTANCE: 320 miles (515 km) DRIVING TIME: 6 to 7 hours WHEN TO GO: Spring and summer PLANNING: Be prepared for rain year-round. west-coast.co.nz

The heavily eroded Pancake Rocks at Punakaiki, where the water bursts through a number of blowholes



1 SKELETON COAST, NAMIBIA

On Namibia's Skeleton Coast you can catch sharks right from a sandy beach. Other fish—steenbras, guitarfish, stingrays, and kob—are here too, but it's the chance to tangle with sharks weighing 200 pounds (90 kg) that's the big appeal. Start at Walvis Bay, where the fishing is good, then drive north on the B2 and C34 to sample the beaches at Henties Bay and Torra Bay.

PLANNING: Fishing here demands specialist tackle, so book through a company with local experts, namibian.org/travel/adventure/fishing

2 WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

Nutrient-rich waters offshore attract tuna and even bigger game like marlin. The shore-based fishing is also excellent. Try casting for stingrays from the harbor wall at Struis Bay, then drive the R43 and R44 to Pringle Bay for a different shore-fishing perspective. Prime season is from December through April.

PLANNING: There are plenty of deep-sea boats to hire from Struis Bay, with competition keeping down rates, westerncape gov.za

3 NEW FOREST COAST, U.K.

Lymington harbor offers fine mullet in summer and flounders in winter, but the real appeal is access to big bass offshore—10-pound (4.5 kg) specimens haunt waters off the Isle of Wight. For more shore fishing, take the B3054 and minor roads to Lepe beach for bass and rays, and the B3053 to Calshot Spit for smoothhounds.

PLANNING: Some charter boats offer lures and, uniquely, fly-fishing for large bass, and occasional shark-fishing trips. wheretoseafish.com

4 NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

The Hudson may not be the world's most beautiful river, but it gives you the chance to take a fishing picture with the Statue of Liberty in the background. Striped bass and bluefish are the targets here, the former benefiting from a commercial fishing ban. Try three contrasting locations, connected by drives through the world's most iconic cityscapes. Begin at Liberty State Park before taking Hwy. 78, Holland Tunnel, and West Street to Battery Park on Manhattan; then drive the 478 and Belt Parkway to Coney Island beach.

10

FISHING COASTS

From sandy tropical shores to wave-battered capes in the Arctic, and from sharks to trevally, the choice of fish-and-drive options is surprisingly varied.

PLANNING: Fishing from the shore is fine, but don't eat your catch: the fish have high concentrations of mercury! dnainfo.com/new-york

5 SAN DIEGO BAY, CALIFORNIA

Try any of San Diego's six popular fishing piers (Cesar Chavez Park Pier is the best) for spotted bay bass, halibut, rays, and guitarfish. Then take Hwy. 75 into Coronado and south to Silver Strand State Beach, which has 25 miles (4 km) of surf fishing. Offshore, the world's largest yellowfin tuna are caught from long-range boats, which regularly take 200-pound (90 kg) specimens, along with dorado, yellowtail, calico bass, and wahoo.

PLANNING: Deepwater trips from San Diego run from four days to nearly a month. longrangesportfishing.net

6 SALINAS, ECUADOR

Huge predators run along the offshore "Marlin Boulevard" from October through February. Marlin are the big attraction here, but inshore you can find huge roost-erfish up to 50 pounds (23 kg), and they are often within casting range for beach anglers. Fish from Salinas, then head north on the E15 to try alternative spots at Montañita, Manta, or Cojimies.

OPPOSITE: The southern coastline of Oman, particularly around Salalah, offers great opportunities to battle with sailfish, tuna, and giant trevally.

PLANNING: If you can't resist the temptation of a blue or black marlin—or the chance to see a blue whale—consider a half-day trip offshore from Salinas. www.calaowonder.com

7 ZEALAND, DENMARK

Falster is one of the few places in the world where you can shore-fish for 20-pound (9 kg) sea trout on fly or lure. Plenty of plaice and flounders can be taken on ragworm from the shore. Drive the E47 west, onto the adjacent island of Lolland, to mix things up. A few boats offer the chance to fish in the Baltic for salmon too.

PLANNING: It's a short season, generally in May, when these huge fish swim close in as they hunt sandeels. *fishingzealand.dk*

8 LOFOTEN ISLANDS, NORWAY

Catching halibut from the shore sounds ridiculous, but 200-pound (90 kg) individuals have been landed from off the rocks. You'll also catch cod, plaice, haddock, and wolffish. Start at Vestpollen Fjord, then head west on the E10 to Ballstad and Nappstraumen Fjord.

PLANNING: Tutorials, guides, bait, and accommodation are available at Nappstraumen. sportquestholidays.com/tour/sea-fishing-lofoten

9 CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA

From Cairns you can cruise for a week on a luxury catamaran with a big-game boat attached to fish for marlin. On the other hand, you can catch barramundi or thread-fin salmon in the estuary or from rocks, or fish the reef for coral trout. There's lots of choice on this coast. Drive north on Rte. 44 to Port Douglas or south on the A1 to Mourilvan harbor or Hinchinbrook Island.

PLANNING: Consider mixing an offshore cruise with a few days' shore fishing. *fishingcairns.com.au*

10 SALALAH, OMAN

Salalah is the best spot on the Arabian Sea, with deep water close to shore. Some very big glant treatly draw fishers here, and you can also catch yellowfin tuna, sailfish, and king mackerel. For other options, drive Rte. 49 east to Mirbat, or continue northeast along 49 and 42 to Ash Shuwaymiyyah.

PLANNING: If you plan to charter a boat, avoid the monsoon season (May through October), when boats often don't leave harbor for days. noboundariesoman.com





The Roman villa of Apollonia sits atop a cliff near the town of Herzliva, a few minutes' drive north of Tel Aviv

ISRAEL

ISRAEL'S SHORELINE HIGHWAY

Stretching 60 miles (90 km) between Tel Aviv and Haifa, Israel's Coastal Highway (Route 2) shoots across the fabled Sharon Plain beside the Mediterranean. Along the way are ancient cities and Bible sites, sun-soaked beaches, and eateries with seminal sea views.

eople have been transiting the Plain of Sharon for at least 7,000 years and it rates several mentions in the Old Testament. Fetch some gourmet goodies from Sarona Market (Israel's largest indoor food emportum) before hitting the road in Tel Aviv. As it makes it sway through the city's northern suburbs, Highway 2 passes the Eretz Israel Museum of archaeology, ethnology, art, and culture. The sprawling complex revolves around Tell Qasile, the ruins of a 12th-century B.C. Philistine seaport. Another 20 minutes up the road is Apollonia National Park, which preserves the remains of a Roman seaside villa, Crusader castle, and Ottoman mosque. Below the sandstone bluffs, Apollonia Beach offers your first chance to take a dip in the sea. The next stretch of Highway 2 features the Hamei Ga'ash natural hot spring (outdoor and indoor pools) and HaSharon Coast National Park, where you can hike a long stretch of the Israel National Trail on bluffs above the sea.

Stop for lunch at one of the shoreline restaurants in Netanya, a city that's said to make the best hummus in Israel. Half an hour farther north is Caesarea, one of the most significant archaeological sites in the entire Mediterranean Basin. Built at the behest of King Herod in the first century A.D., Caesarea later served as the Roman and Byzantine capital of Judea. Among its impressive ruins is an almost perfectly preserved amphitheater overlooking the sea. Just north of the ruins, Nahal Taninim Nature Reserve safeguards a marshy wetlands environment. The home stretch into Haifa runs beside the 13th-century Knights Templar castle at Atlit.

I EXCURSION I Starting from Atlit, a side road (Route 721) off the coastal highway climbs into Mount Carmel National Park with its panoramic views of Haifa and the Med. Israel's largest national park offers hiking, biking, and camping amid a forest alive with deer, jackals, birds of prey, and other wildlife.

FROM: Tel Aviv, Israel
To: Halfa, Israel
ROAD: Coastal Highway
(Route 2)
DISTANCE: 57 miles (91 km)
DIRTING TIME: 1 hour
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Pick up road maps
and rent your car at Ben Gurion
Airport. The Visit Tel Aviv
website offers advice on driving
in urban and rural Israel.
visit-tel-aviv.com/en/driving



90 I DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

GULF OF OMAN

 $The Arabian \, Sea \, coast line \, of \, the \, starkly \, beautiful \, Sultanate \, of \, Oman \, mixes \, white \, sand \,$ beaches, desert landscapes, mountains, historical monuments, and scenic canyons that have been visited only by a fortunate few, until now.

egin in Muscat, Oman's capital and its most diverse city. Along with the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque and numerous smaller mosques, it has two Hindu temples and a number of churches.

There are many attractions here, including the Museum of Omani Heritage, charting the $country's \ long \ history, and \ the \ old \ Mutrah \ Souk, considered \ one \ of \ the \ best \ markets \ in \ the \ Gulf. \ From$ Muscat, you reach the brand-new coastal highway, Rte. 17, which begins at Quriyat, by crossing the colorful Hajar Mountains on the Al-Amirate Road, a 58-mile (94 km) drive that passes whitewashed villages, camels, goat-herders, and unusual rock formations. The descent into the harbor town of Quriyat provides spectacular views of the coastal plain below. Pick up Rte. 17 heading south, passing $through the tranquil\ village\ of\ Dibab.\ You\ can\ visit\ the\ sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ in\ Dibab\ Lake\ Park,\ where\ the\ roof\ of\ Sinkhole\ In\ Sinkh$ an underground river collapsed, creating a deep hole of clear blue water. Steps lead down to the water, so you can swim there. Continue for 24 miles (39 km) along the peaceful coast to the village of Tiwi. $Near by \ lies \ Wadi \ Shab \ set\ among\ palm\ trees, where\ you\ can \ swim, scramble\ up\ a\ waterfall,\ and\ explore$ a cave. The ancient city of Qalhat lies another 12.5 miles (20 km) ahead. Its Bibi Maram mausoleum is thought to be a remnant of a mosque proclaimed the most beautiful in the world by the 12th-century explorer Ibn Battuta. While Sur marks the end of the journey, it is an ideal base from which to explore the isolated coves, coral-strewn beaches, and craggy mountains of the Ras al Hadd Peninsula. Sur's tradition of building dhow trading ships is the focus of the Maritime Museum.

IN FOCUS | Hundreds of people a night come to the Ras al Hadd Turtle Reserve, lured by the appeal of IN FOCUS I Hundreds of people a night come to the Ras al Hadd Turtle Reserve, Jured by the appeal of watching giant green turtles lay where gaps on the beach from May through September. The reserve, just east of Sur, is a modern facility that has organized evening tours, where visitors can watch the turtles bury their eggs in the sand without disturbing them. A second tour takes place as day breaks, when hatchlings from earlier eggs emerge and crawl to the water. Guides take you to the beach, using their flashlights to show the turtles without disturbing them. Flash photography is not allowed, but photos can be taken after sunrise.



FROM: Muscat, Oman To: Sur, Oman ROADS: Al-Amirate Road, Rte. 17 (Sur Highway) DISTANCE: 149 miles (239 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: It is illegal to have a
dirty car. Dress conservatively: keep shoulders and knees covered in public places; swimwear is only for the beach and hotel pools. omantourism.gov.om

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque in Muscat is one of the world's largest mosques, with space for 20,000 worshipers.





The pretty harbor at Sochi, one of Russia's most popular summer destinations

RUSSIA I

BLACK SEA COAST

A drive along the Caucasian Riviera—the northeast coast of the Black Sea—features Sochi as its centerpiece. Western Russia's "summer capital" claims the title of the world's longest city, its 90 miles (145 km) set against a landscape of pristine mountains and woodland.

rom the seaside town of Dzhubga, head south on the E97/A-147 past the port of Tuapse and Magri, where "Greater Sochi," a string of coastal settlements running southeast, begins. On your right, the Black Sea stretches out to the horizon from wood-fringed bays and inlets, dotted by resorts such as Lazarevskoye and Loo; on your left rise the Caucasus Mountains. After Dagomys, which has a tea plantation dating back to 1896, follow signs to Central Sochi, a city of palm-lined avenues, parks, and gardens, and a sea promenade thronged with holidaymakers in the summer. Here you find stately Stalinist buildings designed in the neoclassical style, such as the Sochi Art Museum and the Winter and Summer theaters, along with the more whimsical Maritime Terminal and Railway Station. There is a modernist summer residence set aside for the Russian president, and the lavish homes of oligarchs can be glimpsed through security fences in the upper part of town.

Downtown, where the coast is lined with bars, restaurants, and clubs, the atmosphere is more laid-back. Continue south to Adler, where the A148 branches left to the 2,000-foot (600 m) ski resort of Krasnaya Polyana, providing coastal views before it follows the Mzymta River and weaves around its numerous lakes. At the resort, take a ski lift for a bird's-eye view of the site of the 2014 Winter Olympics.

I STAY A WHILE I Around 15 miles (25 km) northeast of Sochi lies the Caucasian State Biosphere Reserve (permit required in advance, obtainable in Sochi), covering the western end of the Greater Caucasus Mountains, a region that has reemianed virtually untouched by human impact and included Sochi National Park. Among its animal species are wolf, lynx, and brown bear; among its tree specimens are several Nordmann fir, which, rising to some 275 feet (86 m), are believed to be the tallest in Europe. Southeast of Central Sochi, Khosta's ancient woodland recalls a primeval environment of some 30 million years past.

FROM: Dzhubga, Russia
TO: Krasnaya Polyana, Russia
ROADS: E97/A-147, A148
DISTANCE: 152 miles (245 km)
DRIVING TIME: 5.5 hours
WHEN TO 60: May through
September
PLANNING: Soch i hosts Russia's
largest annual film festival in
June, when accommodations
can be difficult to find.
visit-plus.com/node/3896



92 I DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

TURKU ARCHIPELAGO TRAIL

Twelve bridges and nine ferries are part of the fun on a drive through the Turku Archipelago, with thousands of wooded islands and rocky islets lying between Finland and Sweden. Most local folk here are bilingual, speaking Finnish and Swedish.

tarting at Turku Cathedral, whose chimes ring out on Finnish national radio every day at noon, leave the small city—Finland's oldest—on Rte. 110 to Kaarina. This is a section of the ancient King's Road along which kings, bishops, merchants, and pilgrims traveled between Norway and Russia. Turn south onto Rte. 180 via Parainen (Pargas), the gateway to the archipelago, whose isles were sculpted round and smooth in the last ice age. Take the Parainen–Nauvo (Nagu) and Nauvo–Korppoo (Korpo) cable ferries, and guided by the brown trail signs, follow Rte. 180 through a forested island andscape. You may spot deer or moose swimning from one island to the next. Continue to Galtby, with its bustling market and pottery and art shops. A 1-mile (1.6 km) detour south of Galtby is the village of Korpo, with a fine 18th-century church. Return to Galtby and follow Rte. 1800 to the inlet at Galtby Brygga. Take the bright yellow ferry past rocky islets lined with cormorants and other seabirds to Houtskari (Houtskär), which has a local museum. Return to Rte. 1800 and head north to the Roslax–Kivimo ferry. Follow the main road east, then north to the Björkö–Mossala ferry, and across the next island to the Mossala–Dalen ferry, the longest crossing on the route. Look for white-tailed eagles, the iconic bird of the archipelago, and the bobbing heads of seals.

Cross the small island of Iniö, dominated by the imposing Sophia Wilhelmina Church, and take the cable ferry to Jumo, where Vikings once set sail on trading voyages to Sweden, then the Kannvik-Heponiemi ferry. Follow Rte. 1922 northward, and 1 mile (1.6 km) beyond Parattula turn right onto Rte. 192 and head east to Taivassalo, with an archipelago visitor center near the harbor. At the roundabout 13 miles (22 km) beyond Taivassalo, turn south onto Rte. 1930 through Rauduinen to Porhonkallio. At the roundabout, follow Rte. 189 to the harbor town of Naantali, with its Moominworld island—a theme park based on the books of Finnish artist and storyteller Tove Jansson. Kultaranta, the granite manor house on Luonnonmaa island, is the summer residence of the president of Finland. Open to the public, its formal gardens include a celebrated rose garden. Finally, follow Elis/Rte. 185 back to Turku.



FROM: Loop route from Turku, Finland
ROADS: Rtes. 110, 180, 1800, 1922, 192, 1930, 189, E18/185
DISTANCE: 142 miles (230 km)
DININIG TIME: 9 hours
WHEN TO GO: June through
August. The last Saturday in
August is the Night of Ancient
Fires, when fireworks fill the sky
PLANNING: Obtain ferry
schedules in advance.
saaristo.org

 $In \ mid summer, the islands of Finland's \ Turku \ archipelago \ are \ characterized \ by \ pine \ forests, calm \ lakes, \ birdsong, and \ endless \ daylight \ d$





1 LAKE BALATON, HUNGARY

While tacky resorts largely mar its southern shore, the northern coastline of Europe's largest freshwater lake rewards drivers with vineyards, decaying villas, thermal spas, and historic villages fringed by woodlands and reed-beds. From Balatonvilágos, allow four hours to circumnavigate the lake via the town of Siófok on the south coast.

PLANNING: Balaton offers pleasant swimming May-October, but avoid the high season (July-August). gotohungary.com

2 LAKE MAGGIORE, ITALY/

Renowned for its romantic beauty, this long, narrow lake is surrounded by hills to the north and mountains to the south. The 112-mile (179 km) long road passes abundant attractions, including historic Ascona, the botanical gardens on the Isole di Brissago, the hiking paradise of Centovalli, the glorious Borromean Islands, the Borromeo and Cannero castles, and its main resort, the sedate town of Stresa.

PLANNING: The western shore is the prettier. A car ferry plies between Intra (Verbania) and Laveno on the eastern shore. *italiantourism.com*

3 LAKE VÄNERN, SWEDEN

Sweden's greatest lake is the world's largest freshwater archipelago, where more than 20,000 islands and islets await exploration. From Trollhättan, head dockwise via Vanersborg for a 254-mile (408 km) loop. You can fish for oversize salmon and trout, explore Viking boat-graves, or simply imbibe the splendid Scandinavian scenery.

PLANNING: Midsummer and Christmas are joyous times to visit. In summer, near-daylong sunshine encourages alfresco nightlife along Vanern's shores. visitsweden.com

4 LAKE DISTRICT, ENGLAND

A fine drive through this national park starts at Windermere, running south along Lake Windermere to the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Steam Railway, then heading north along the lake's forested western shore to Hill Top, Beatrix Potter's home. The road to Keswick from Hawkswood via Aira Force delivers breathtaking fell views.

PLANNING: Avoid Lake Windermere in oppressively crowded high summer. cumbria-the-lake-district.co.uk 10

LAKESIDE DRIVES

Discover the finest lakes, from Italy's most romantic and the USA's deepest to England's evocative Lake District.

5 LOUGH CORRIB, IRELAND

The road around Lough Corrib mainly runs some distance from its shores—reachable by certain access roads—but takes you through dramatic moorland and mountain landscape. The lough reputedly has an island for every day of the year, but for many, its prime appeal is world-class fly-fishing for salmon and trout.

PLANNING: Start at Oughterard, a market town with places to stay, angling shops, and fishing-tour operators. *discoverireland.ie*

6 CRATER LAKE, OREGON

High in Oregon's Cascade Mountains, Crater Lake is the USA's deepest lake (1,949 feet/594 m), filling a caldera left by an ancient volcanic eruption. Marvel at its limpid blue waters from the 33-mile (53 km) Rim Drive, which circles the cliffs surrounding the caldera. The drive's 30 or so viewing points include a stop by the beautiful Videa Falls and Pumice Castle Overlook.

PLANNING: The full loop is usually open July through October. Even in summer, check the website for partial closures due to rockfalls or the like. nps.gov/crla/planyourvisit/scenic-rim-drive.htm

7 LAKE ATITLÁN, GUATEMALA

Surrounded by the green cones of volcanic peaks, Atitlán in Guatemala's southwest highlands is regularly touted as one of the world's most beautiful lakes. An added

OPPOSITE: Loughrigg Tarn in England's Lake District looks at its best surrounded by fall colors and mist. attraction is the colorful Maya culture of the communities that dot its shores, where people still wear traditional costumes, differing from village to village.

PLANNING: The villages of Santa Cruz and Jaibalito on the north shore can only be reached by boat. The best time to visit is during the dry season, November through April. atitlan.com

8 LAKE TAZAWA, HONSHU, JAPAN

In the remote uplands of northern Honshu, Tazawa lake is a place of serene beauty where you forget the bustle and pressure of Japan's great cities. In the circular drive around the lake, stop by the 17th-century Goza-no-ishi Shinto shrine with a fine red torii arch. On the western shore, a gold statue commemorates the legendary Tatsuko, a young woman who prayed to keep her youth and beauty, but instead was turned into the lake's quardian dragon.

PLANNING: In summer, enjoy the hiking trails through the surrounding mountains combined with a soak in a hot-spring bath, or onsen. In winter, there is skiing, japan-guide.com/e/e3657.html

9 LAKE BRATAN, BALI, INDONESIA

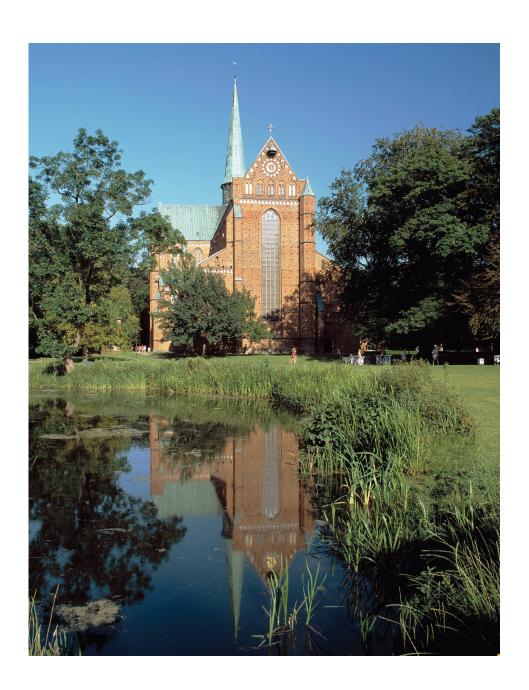
Take a break from coastal Bali to visit three lakes—Tamblimgam, Buyan, and Bratan—in the large caldera of a long-dormant volcano. Of these, Bratan is the most famous, with the village of Candikuning on its western shore. Stop to admire the beautiful lakeside water temple, Pura Ulun Danu Bratan, built in 1633 in honor of the river, lake, and water goddess Dewi Danu.

PLANNING: The botanical garden in Candikuning is worth a visit, as are the water temples by the quieter Tamblimgam and Buyan lakes. indonesia -tourism.com/bali/bratan-lake.html

10 LAKE MALAWI AND THE SHIRE RIVER, MALAWI

Start in Cape Maclear, on the southern shore of Lake Malawi, a small fishing village popular with travelers. You can go on a fishing trip or visit Mumbo Island, an uninhabited offshore retreat. Drive south around the lake until you reach Mangochi. From here, the Shire River runs south through Liwonde National Park, where you can take hippo-spotting boat trips.

PLANNING: You could spend up to a week enjoying this 125-mile (200 km) drive. safaridrive.com



ALONG THE BALTIC COAST

Sandy beaches, lush landscapes, fishing villages, and historic harbors are attractions in this drive along Germany's Baltic shore. Here, you can enjoy the pleasures of smart seaside hotels and the wildness of saltwater lagoons, where migrating birds stop off in spring and fall.



 $The \ vivid \ yellow \ of \ rapeseed \ blossom \ complements \ the \ bright \ colors \ of \ that ched \ cottages \ in \ Ahrenshoop.$

eave the ancient port city of Wismar on the old B105 road toward Rostock, ignoring the Autobahn Rostock signs and taking the old road. Turn north before Kröpelin, passing through wooded hills to reach Kühlungsborn, the biggest resort on the Baltic coast, with 2.5 miles (4 km) of sandy beach and many opulent hotels and villas. Even if you don't swim, surf, or sunbathe, do stroll along the pier to enjoy the sea air. Continue along the coast to Heiligendamm, dating from the 1790s, with fine neoclassical buildings. Rejoin the B105 at Bad Doberan (see Highlights), stopping at the town's Gothic minster, with its gilded high altar and a tabernacle carved in oak. Outside, look for the ossuary (Beinhaus), where the monks' bones were preserved.

Continue on the B105 through Rostock, turning north at the town of Ribnitz-Damgarten (see Highlights) onto a minor road toward Dierhagen. You are nowentering the Fischland-Darss-Zingst peninsula, much of which is preserved as the Nationalpark Vorpommersche Boddenlandschaft. This popular vacation area has woods, meadows, boglands, dunes, and saltwater lagoons. Its old fishing villages have kept much of their original character—there are no swanky villas and plenty of thatched cottages. A good place to get the feel of the Fischland is the village of Ahrenshoop, whose harbor is often filled with traditional fishing boats, known as Zeesenboote. Even the village church is built in the shape of an upturned boat. Farther along the peninsula, the Darss region is dominated by woodland and the resort of Prerow (see Highlights). Follow the sea wall for 2.5 miles (4 km), after which the road turns back toward the mainland. The final stop is the little harbor town of Barth, founded in the 13th century. Wander along the quayside, once bustling with the activity of a port, now a peaceful haven for yachts.

I EXCURSION I From Ribnitz-Damgarten, drive east on the 8105 to Stralsund, one of the Baltic's best preserved old harbor crities. Almost completely surrounded by water, this compact city has a skyline dominated by three great churches, and its streets are lined with houses that predate the Thirty Years Way (1618–48).

OPPOSITE: A pool reflects the elegant lines of Bad Doberan's 14th-century red-brick minster church.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Bad Doberan bears the imprint of Duke Friedrich Franz Lof Mecklenburg, who made the town his summer capital. His palace is now a hotel, and one of the charming Chinese-style pavilions in the middle of the Kamp, a park-like village green, is a café.

Ribnitz-Damgarten's **Bernstein Museum**, housed in a monastery building, has a fascinating collection of amber, including specimens containing immaculately preserved fossilized insects.

The region's seafaring heritage is in evidence at **Prerow's** red-brick church, adorned inside with suspended boat models and colorful carvings reminiscent of ships' figureheads.

FROM: Wismar, Germany
TO: Barth, Germany
TO: Barth, Germany
ROADS; BIOS, local roads
DISTANCE: 93 miles (150 km)
DRIVING TIME: 35 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Kühlungsborn is a
good place to stop overnight,
but book places to stay well
in advance.
germany-tourism.co.uk





The Svartisen glacier inches its way toward the emerald waters of Holandsfjord, south of Bodø.

NORWAY

NORWAY'S COASTAL ROUTE

Cross the Arctic Circle as you follow one of Europe's most mesmerizing drives—the spectacular Kystriksveien (literally, coastal route) in northern Norway, where every bend in the road opens up wondrous new vistas of sea, fjord, and mountain.

teinkjer lies nearly 40 miles (64 km) inland, yet like much of Norway it is connected to the sea by a fjord. You'll drive through hilly agricultural land around the small town of Namdalseid as you head north on Rte. 17. Soon you reach Namsos, an old lumber town on the shores of a small bay at the mouth of the Namsen, famous as a salmon-fishing river. Hike (or drive) up the Klompen mountain for a superb view of Namsenfjord before heading northwest along Rte. 769 through beautiful coastal scenery. After the Lund-Hoffles ferry, continue to Rørvik, home of a coastal museum, before taking a slight backtrack on Rte. 770 to rejoin Rte. 17. Head north to Holm, after which another ferry ride beckons, crossing a wide fjord to Vennesund. Stop at the textile and ceramic workshop just past the hamlet of Berg before carrying on to Brønnøysund. Running through the center of the nearby Torghatten mountain is a unique, naturally formed tunnel, carved during the last ice age. Continue north, board a ferry from Horn to Anndalsvåg, and drive to Forvik. After the pretty $town of Alstahaug, you cross the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ and the first of the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, then take the ferry from Levang \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, the helgeland \ for the Helgeland Bridge \ east of Sandnessjøen, the helgeland \ for the H$ to Nesna. Sjonfjellet mountain brings some of the route's most spectacular views, and just north of Stokkvågen, you can explore a German World War II fortress. The 60-minute ferry ride from Kilboghavn takes you across the Arctic Circle. You then drive to Ågskardet to take the final ferry to Forøy. From the $road\ to\ Glomfjord,\ you\ can\ see\ Svartisen,\ one\ of\ Norway's\ largest\ glaciers.\ North\ of\ Reipå,\ a\ memorial$ $to a submarine sunk off shore during World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint. \, Continue \, on \, Rte. \, a submarine sunk \, off shore \, during \, World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint. \, Continue \, on \, Rte. \, a submarine sunk \, off shore \, during \, World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint. \, Continue \, on \, Rte. \, a submarine sunk \, off shore \, during \, World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint. \, Continue \, on \, Rte. \, a submarine sunk \, off shore \, during \, World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint. \, Continue \, on \, Rte. \, a submarine sunk \, off shore \, during \, World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint. \, Continue \, on \, Rte. \, a submarine sunk \, off shore \, during \, World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint. \, A submarine sunk \, off shore \, during \, World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint \, A submarine sunk \, off shore \, during \, World \, War \, II \, has a spectacular \, coastal \, viewpoint \, A submarine sunk \, coastal \, viewpoint \, A submari$ 17, then head west on Rte. 80 to the large city of Bodø.

FROM: Steinkjer, Norway
TO: Bodø, Norway
ROADS: Rtes. 17, 769, 770, 80
DISTANCE: 446 miles (718 km)
DRIVING TIME: 14 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall



98 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

DOWN BY THE ADRIATIC

The wars of the early 1990s forced Montenegro to drop from the tourist map for a time, yet it possesses one of Europe's most beautiful coastlines, with mountains rising inland, sparkling beaches, and enticing historic towns and cities.

rom the walls of Dubrovnik (see In Focus), near Croatia's southern tip, take the E65 south for the 25-mile (40 km) journey to the Montenegrin border. Soon you arrive at the mountain-shrouded waters of the Bay of Kotor and the medieval town of Herceg Novi, famed for its healing mud. Sitting under the gaze of Mount Orjen, Herceg Novi, like the rest of Montenegro, has been marked by $numerous\ occupying\ powers, including\ the\ Ottoman\ Turks\ and\ the\ Austrians, who\ left\ a\ diverse\ blend$ of architectural styles and a number of impressive fortresses. The road hugs the bay as you approach the town of Perast, with magnificent baroque palaces and churches. In the walled town of Kotor, be sure to visit the 12th-century Cathedral of St. Tryphon, whose altar is a masterpiece of Romanesque craftsmanship, and the Maritime Museum housed in a baroque palace. Leave town on the E65 as it winds around the bay, driving through the hamlet of Pracanj and on to Tivat, a former naval base currently being converted into a port for super-yachts. The road briefly cuts inland through verdant hills before arriving at Budva. Dating from the fifth century B.C., this is one of the oldest towns on the Adri $atic, graced\ with\ fine\ Venetian\ architecture\ and\ cliff-backed\ beaches,\ while\ its\ vibrant\ nightlife\ makes$ it Montenegro's most popular seaside destination. A little farther along is the beach resort of Bečići, Take the E80 to the walled village of Sveti Stefan, a near-island connected to the mainland by a narrow $is thmus, which be witches \ visitors \ with its \ picture sque \ streets \ watched \ over \ by \ green \ mountains \ slop-normalise \ slop-normalise \ picture \ square \ picture \ pic$ ing to the sea. After that, the coast road (now the E851 or M24) winds on for another 36 miles (58 km) past the beaches of Petrovac, through the historic port town of Bar-home to a collection of centuriesold buildings—to your final destination, Ulcinj, where Montenegro's longest sandy beach awaits you.

IN FOCUS Medieval walls up to 18 feet (5.5 m) thick and 80 feet (24 m) high surround **Dubrovnik**'s ancient center, loved for its architectural treasures and sublime setting between the mountains and the sea. Attractions include Europe's oldest pharmacy still in operation, dating from 1317. Boat tours allow you to explore offshore islands, such as the beautiful Eaffit archipelago.







FROM: Dubrovnik, Croatia
TO: Ulcinj, Montenegro
RoaDs: E65, E80, E851/M24
DISTANCE: 112 miles (180 km)
DRIVING TIME: 4 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Remember your
passport as you may be asked
for it. If you want to use public
transportation, there is a bus
most mornings from Dubrovnik
to Budva, where you may have
to change to carry on to Ulcinj.
montenegro.travel



I ITALY I

ALONG THE AMALFI COAST

With numerous switchbacks and plunging drops to the sea, the drive along the Amalfi coast is as hair-raising as it is stunning, with sublime views of towns and villages perched on top of rugged mountains, and tiny inlets and harbors where fishing boats bob at anchor.



Positano's tiled dome and cascade of pastel-colored houses make it one of the jewels of the Amalfi coast

| HIGHLIGHTS |

The **Grotta dello Smeraldo**, a little beyond the Vallone di Furore, is a marine cave of luminous emerald waters reached by either an elevator or rock-carved steps from the main road, and then a short boat ride.

Amalfi's cathedral, the **Duomo di Sant'Andrea**, has an intricate
12th-century facade and wonderful
11th-century Byzantine bronze doors.

Open to all, the romantic gardens of the Villa Cimbrone in Ravello provide a justly celebrated view of the coast framed by a line of statues: the Belvedere Cimbrone. The gardens of Villa Rufolo are the venue for the Festival di Ravello, a series of classical concerts held April—October

tarting in genteel Sorrento, take the minor coastal road leading to Massa Lubrense, where you can pick up the little road with spurs that provide access to the Sorrento Peninsula's rugged western tip, Punta Campanella. Compared with much of the coast, this area is beautifully undeveloped—all lemon trees, olive groves, sea views, and coastal trails. From Massa Lubrense, continue on the coast road past the hamlets of Marciano and Termini, and eastward to Sant'Agata sui Due Golfi, named for its sweeping views over the Gulf of Naples to the north and Gulf of Salerno to the south. At Sant'Agata, take the proper coast road (SS145), built in 1853, that brings views of the islands of Li Galli, and then the SS163 past Positano, a village of pastel-colored houses set against cliffs and lemon trees. Farther along the coast, the road becomes busier as it heads through Vertica and Praiano, which marks the start of the most rugged part of the trip. At the Vallone di Furore, a dramatic gorge opens to the sea, a little beyond Marina di Praia. Continue to Amalfi (see Highlights) and Atrani, and make a small detour into the hills to the alluring little town of Ravello (see Highlights), a cool retreat in summer. Looping back to the coast road, you pass Maiori, with its large, developed beach, and the Capod'Orso.

The cape is a protected reserve and one of the coast's loveliest features, with trails to the lighthouse and the Abbazia di Santa Maria Olearia, a rock-cut abbey from the 10th century. The road then passes Cetara, known for its tuna industry, to reach Vietri sul Mare, with its famed ceramics on display all over the town.

STAY A WHILE A short boat trip from several points on the coast takes you to Capri, a chic island and first-rate luxury playground. Since Roman times, visitors have come for the balmy climate, rugged coastline, whitewashed villages, and subtropical lushness of the hilly interior. A funcular climbs from the harbor to the main village of Capri, which has an impressive array of cafés and designer boutiques. To the east is Villa Jovis, the remains of Emperor Tiberius's hideaway. At the village of Anacapri stands the Villa San Michele with magnificent views.

FROM: Sorrento, Italy
TO: Vietri sul Mare, Italy
ROADS: Local roads, SS145, SS163
DISTANCE: 50 miles (80 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round: the
high summer season is the
busiest, especially on tiny Capri,
where hotels and restaurants
should be booked well in

advance.

PLANNING: sorrentotourism.com



OPPOSITE: The Mediterranean shimmers in the summer heat—as seen from the gardens of Villa Rufolo, Ravello.

THE RIVIERA

The Corniche Inférieure (Low Coast Road) linking Nice and Monaco was built in the 1860s to bring gamblers to the new Monte-Carlo casino. It offers classic views of the Mediterranean, bougainvillea-draped villages, and lavish, belle-époque estates.

eaving the elegant town of Nice eastward on Boulevard Carnot (M6098), you follow the sinuous road along the base of Mont Boron, soon coming in view of a striking panorama over Villefranche bay to St.-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, the flowery $pen insula\,where\,princes, millionaires, and\,movie\,stars\,luxuriate.\,Almost\,immediately$ vou come to Villefranche-sur-Mer, its rose- and cream-colored dwellings stacked on the hillside. This splendid little town features the Citadelle St.-Elme, a historic fortress now housing a modern art museum, and the Chapelle de St.-Pierre, its thick walls and barrel vaults decorated in 1957 by the avant-garde artist Jean Cocteau. Farther east, take a quick tour of Cap-Ferrat by dipping south onto the peninsula via the M125. Watch for glitterati as you stretch your legs on the path edging the peninsula, and visit the powder-pink $Villa\,Ephrussi\,de\,Rothschild, full\,of\,paintings\,and\,objets\,d'art.\,The\,nine\,gardens, watered\,by\,fountains, and\,objets\,d'art.\,The\,nine\,gardens, watered\,by\,fountains, and objets\,d'art.\,The\,nine\,gardens, watered\,by\,fountains, watered\,by\,fountains, and objets\,d'art.\,The\,nine\,gardens, watered\,by\,fountains, wa$ $are astonishingly beautiful. \ Back on the road, another upmarket village, quiet \ Beaulieu-sur-Mer, awaits$ a few miles farther east—the wide, sandy beach is a gem, graced with a long promenade. At the village of Eze-Bord-de-Mer, peer up the mountain to the 14th-century village of Eze teetering on a rock pillar high above the beach—there are stairs to walk up, but be forewarned: they're steep! Onward, a succession of views over the sparkling sea ushers you into Monaco, the glittering, legendary principality ruled by the Grimaldi family since the 13th century.

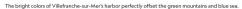
IN FOCUS I Higher up the mountainside, the Moyenne Corniche (Middle Coast Road), or M6007, offers a dizzying drive with balcony views over cliff and sea. Around the midpoint of the drive, the medieval village of Ezer isse 15.50 feet, C472 m) directly above the sea. Its steep, shory-filled landes wind up to the Jardin Exotique, with cactuses sprouting among castle ruins. Higher still, the Grande Corniche (Great Coast Road), or M2564, rides the cliff tops at 16.00 feet (487 m), following the Roman Via Aurelia, used to conquer the west. Today, it's the playground of race-driver wannabes and fearless cyclists.

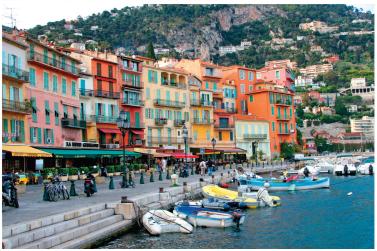


FROM: Nice, France
TO: Monaco
ROADS: M6098, M125
DISTANCE: 20.5 miles (33 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1 hour
WHEN TO GO: The prettiest
time is April and May. Avoid

when to Go: The prettiest time is April and May, Avoid summer, when congestion can be maddening.

PLANNING: Return to Nice on the AB, a 30-minute drive; or, to see the same views from a different angle, take one of the other corniches (see In Focus).







 $The \,mellow-brick \,medieval \,town \,of \,Tossa \,de \,Mar \,marks \,the \,starting \,point \,for \,exploring \,the \,beautiful \,Catalonian \,coastline.$

SPAIN I

COSTA BRAVA

 $Given \ the \ rugged \ beauty \ of \ the \ extreme \ nor theast \ coast \ of \ Spain, it's \ not \ surprising \ that$ it has been the target of cheap resort development. The delightful surprise is that long stretches of cliffs and white beaches remain intact, to be enjoyed in peace.

he medieval watchtower of Tossa de Mar recedes into the distance as you set out on the ${\it GI-682}\ coast\ road,\ climbing\ a\ series\ of\ switch backs\ cut\ into\ the\ cliffs.\ After\ the\ seaside\ town\ of$ Sant Feliu de Guíxols, you come upon a run of popular beaches, starting with Platja d'Aro and, after exiting onto the C-31 inland highway at Palamós, the delightful sands of Calella de Palafrugell, $Llafranc, and \, Tamariu. \, The \, last \, is \, the \, quietest, \, with \, limpid \, water \, backed \, by \, thick \, woods. \, A \, little \, farther \, backed \, by \, backed \, by \, backed \, by \, backed \, backed \, by \, backed \, ba$ on lies the cove of Aiguablava. Take the GIP-6532 to Fornells and the bustling town of Begur. From here, $\,$ take the GI-653 and GIV-6502 to Pals, with its Gothic defensive walls and centuries-old mansions. The castle ruins of Torroella de Montgrí appear high above, as the GI-632 leads north to L'Escala, a pleasant seaside spot, before the GI-623 cuts inland and north past the nature reserve of Parc Natural dels Aiguamolls de l'Empordà. A little farther on, Castelló d'Empúries awaits you, its old center $\,$ dominated by the Gothic Església de Santa Maria. Continue east on the C260 and GI-614 through the highlands of the Cap de Creus Peninsula to reach the chic town of Cadaqués and Port Lligat, former

UNEXPECTED PLEASURE | The marine nature reserve of the Illes Medes, with its labyrinth of underwater tunnels and caves and more than 1.400 species of animal and plant life, lies off the coast town of L'Estartit-east of Torroella de Montgri on the Gi-641. The islets are a favorite diving and snorkeling spot—the deepest drive is 164 feet (\$0 m), where you may encounter rays as well as octopuses.

FROM: Tossa de Mar, Spain To: Cadaqués, Spain ROADS: GI-682, C-31, GIP-6532, GI-653, GIV-6502, GI-632, GI-623, C260, GI-614 DISTANCE: 83 miles (133 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: catalunya.com



BY SEA & SHORE | 103

THE GARDEN ROUTE

This stretch of South Africa's coast must have seemed like the Garden of Eden to early Dutch settlers, with its hidden coves and endless beaches edging lakes, rivers, and wetlands, the entire sweep nestled between mountains and ocean.

fter climbing to the top of Mossel Bay's St. Blaize Lighthouse to spot whales and dolphins, and exploring the town's excellent museums, head northeast on the N2 Garden Route to George. The town, 5 miles (8 km) inland at the $base \, of \, the \, Outeniqua \, Mountains, \, boasts \, some \, world\text{-}class \, golf \, courses \, and \, beautiful$ colonial buildings. The Garden Route Botanical Garden shows off the local flora, including cape reeds, daisies, and Afromontane forest. After the town of Wilderness, which no longer lives up to its name, pass through Wilderness National Park, a 13-mile (20 km) stretch of $forest\ interspersed\ with\ lagoons\ and\ lakes.\ This\ is\ a\ paradise\ for\ birdlife,\ including\ five\ types\ of\ king-paradise\ for\ birdlife,\ birdl$ fisher, black-headed heron, and the brightly colored Knysna turaco. After the seaside resort of Sedgefield, the road passes Buffalo Bay, where you can go horseback riding through the surf. Next stop is Knysna, which has plenty of bars and restaurants and sits on a beautiful lagoon surrounded by one ofSouth Africa's largest indigenous forests, with many Afromontane species. About a half-hour drive onward brings you to Knysna Elephant Park (see Unexpected Pleasure), where guides allow access to orphaned animals. Farther along the N2 is the seaside village of Plettenberg Bay, with almost 6 miles (10 km) of immaculate sandy beaches. After crossing Nature's Valley, a small village on the Groot River estuary surrounded by dense forest, the road meanders into Storms River. This small village is a center for outdoor activities such as mountain biking and river tubing. The adventurous can throw themselves off Bloukrans Bridge in one of the world's highest bungee jumps.

UNEXPECTED PLEASURE Drive east from Knysna along N2, and just beyond Harkerville is the Knysna Elephant Park, where visitors can get "up close and personal" with orphaned elephants in 148 acres (60 ha) of grassland. Some of the animals have been rescued from the wild, and others are former circus performers. Open daily, the park's rangers allow people to walk with the giant mammals and find out more about their lifestyle. Since 1994, when the park opened, they have cared for more than 40 of these fascinating creatures.

FROM: Mossel Bay, South Africa
TO: Storms River, South Africa
ROAD: N2 Garden Route
DISTANCE: 121 miles (196 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round,
although it can be crowded in
the summer months, especially
December; the region is also
popular at Easter.

PLANNING: gardenroute.co.za

The mighty Indian Ocean meets the Great Brak River at Mossel Bay



ALSO RECOMMENDED

• ATLANTIC COAST DRIVE, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

Starting out from Halifax, the landscape is bleak, passing remote fishing ports battered by the ocean and cottages perched beside harbors. The road sticks to the coast, passing astring of small towns, including much-photographed Peggy's Cove. Watch out for sea mist unexpectedly rolling in as you head 225 miles (362 km) south to Barrington.

• GREAT LAKES SEAWAY TRAIL, OHIO

Niagara Falls are the undisputed highlight along this famous route marked by green and white signs. But with water in view for much of the route between Erie and Thousand Islands and a succession of pretty lakeside ports and towns, this legendary drive has plenty more to offer.

seawaytran.com

• EAST SHORE, LAKE TAHOE, NEVADA

This drive has earned a description as "the most beautiful drive in America." And it's no wonder. As you cruise along Rte. 28, crystal clear Lake Tahoe is breathtaking, the pine trees bristle, and the mountains are often dusted with snow. Stop along the way for water sports, golfing, and skiing. visitinglaketahoe.com

HAMAKUA COAST, HAWAII

Beginning at Hilo, the drive passes spiny black rocks and crashing waves at Onomea Bay before reaching Waipo Valley overlook. Head north on Hawaii 19, keeping an eye out for sea turtles, and visit Akaka Falls State Park and Kolekole Stream. Farther on you come to Laupahoehoe Beach—a unique lava peninsula pounded by surf. gohawaii.com

• BAJA PENINSULA, MEXICO

The route from Tijuana south to Cabo San Lucas—historically popular with adventurous naturalists and anglers—was finally paved in 1974. Hwy. Istill isn't the smoothest ride, but it's excellent for whale-watching from Laguna Ojo de Liebre or snorkeling at Caleta San Lucas.

visitmexico.com

• CHACARITA TO CARATE, COSTA RICA

To visit such paradises as Rincón, where views reach all the way to Panama, or Playa Sombrero, where only the most skilled surfers dare enter the ocean's extreme swells, drive along Osa Hwy, 245. After curling 73 milles (117 km) around the peninsula you reach Carate, perched at the edge of Parque Nacional Corcovado. visitostatrica.com

BARILOCHE TO EL BOLSÓN, ARGENTINA

The lakes of Parque Nacional Nahuel Huapi along RN40 offer sparkling clear waters among snowcapped peaks. When you arrive in El Bolsón visit the famous street markets and hike in the nearby mountains. Spend the night at Lago Puelo. patagonia-argentina.com

PAIHIA TO CAPE REINGA, NEW ZEALAND

To explore the famous 90 Mile Beach, you'll need to join a tour or bring your own 4WD. There's more to this drive than simple surf and sand—watch out for quicksand streams, and in Waiharrara, investigate an ancient, buried kauri forest. Bring a boogie board for sliding down dunes.

explorenz.co.nz/Dune-Rider

• GREAT NATURE TRAIL, TASMANIA

Spend some time spotting wallabies and wombats at Narawntapu National Park, just east of Devonport. Then take Bass Highway to Burnie, stopping off in the small town of Penguin to see—you guessed it—penguins! Continue west to Wynyard, famous for its October tulips, and on to Stanley, a fishing village dominated by a volcanic plug known as "the Nut."

discovertasmania.com

• NORTHEAST LOOP, PHUKET, THAILAND

From Two Heroines Monument traffic circle, go east on Hwy. 4027, passing small Thai communities built around fishing areas and shrimp farms. Just 7.5 miles (12 km) after the circle, turn to follow signs for Ao Po and enjoy a loop with great views. obukettowist.com

• ANTRIM COAST, NORTHERN IRELAND

Snaking through varied geological formations, the A2 runs 53 miles (85 km) from Ballygalley to Bushmills. At Carrick-a-Rede, walk across a precarious rope bridge—the only thing separating you from a chasm foaming with surf 98 feet (30 m) below. At the famous Giant's Causeway, tall columns of solidified lava rise from the sea. End the drive with a relaxing ferry ride to Larne.

discovernorthernireland.com

• ILJU ROAD, JEJU, SOUTH KOREA

The volcanic island of Jeju is one of South Korea's finest vacation destinations. Drive along the coastal Ijlu Road, with the echo-ing waves on one side and volcanic cones and curious laval structures on the other. If time allows, head inland on one of the many connecting highways. There are many observation platforms along the highway, which is best in spring.

• LAKE OHRID, MACEDONIA/

With cool breezes, clear waters, and a mountainous backdrop, Lake Ohrid is the deepest Balkan lake. The 56-mile (90 km) loop from Ohrid, the main town on the eastern, Macedonian side, lets you drive around the lake, crossing the border twice. The most striking leg of the drive is the southeastern shore of the lake, between Peštani and the Mausoleum of St. Naum near Macedonia's border.

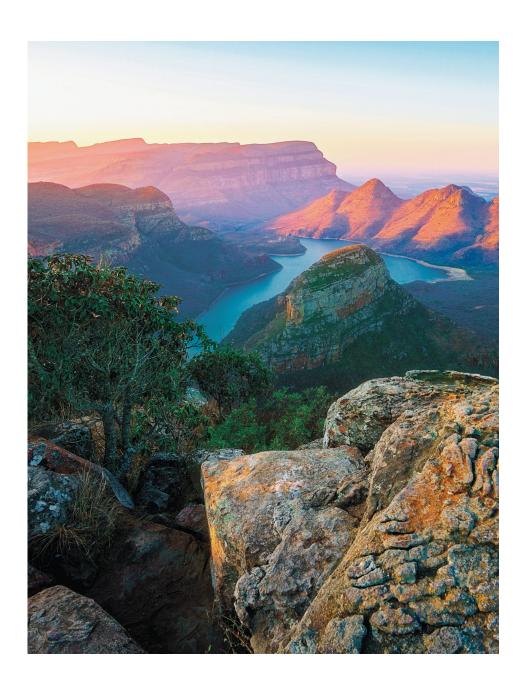
ohrid.com.m

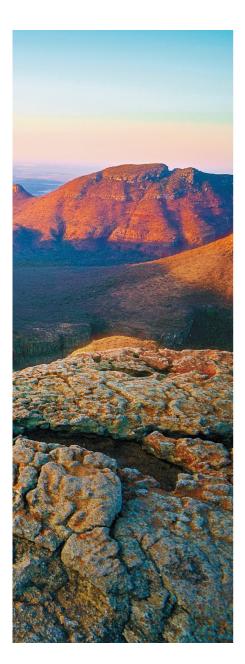
LAKE CONSTANCE, GERMANY/ SWITZERLAND/AUSTRIA

Near the Alps, Lake Constance is actually a giant swelling of the River Rhine. Drive clockwise around the lake from Konstanz, taking time to enjoy water sports, swimming, cruising, hiking, and lazing on beaches, as well as medieval towns, nature reserves, and vineyards. Lake Constance is an hour's drive from Zurich. The route is busiest in summer; fall is a good time to visit, with the grape harvest and wine festivals to enjoy.

bodensee.eu

BY SEA & SHORE | 105





RIVERS, VALLEYS & CANYONS

he routes for some of the world's most memorable drives are those created by nature herself, inscribed by the slow but implacable movements of water and rock across vast stretches of time. $Rivers\,are\,journeys\,all\,their\,own, their\,routes\,to\,the\,sea$ having provided the stage for endless human dramas and stunning geological change. Some of the journeys $\,$ on the following pages lead deep into the world's wild places, where the scarcity of human traffic allows for spectacular surprises: the Ultimate Road Trip through rainbow-colored rock formations of unearthly beauty in southern Utah's Canyonlands; a visit to a dinosaur's nest in the Canadian province of Alberta; a quest into the heart of Peru's Atacama Desert and the land of the ancient Nasca people. Others are gentler, more reflective journeys through the highways and byways of social history, folklore, architecture, and the arts: a music-lover's meander through the Mississippi Delta, birthplace of the blues; a sampling of New England mansions, riverboats, and a gem of a Victorian opera house in the Connecticut River Valley; and a stately progress along Germany's River Elbe, with its Saxon castles, opulent palaces, and old-world spas.

The sun sets on the Blyde River Canyon in South Africa's dramatic Drakensberg Mountains, with the tough quartzite and shale peaks of the Three Rondavels in the distance.

RIVERS, VALLEYS & CANYONS | 107



The Qu'Appelle River Valley meanders through a graceful landscape of grasslands.

| CANADA |

SASKATCHEWAN PRAIRIES

This leisurely drive through southern Saskatchewan combines rolling plains, a pretty river valley, forested hills, and small towns redolent of the history of the fur trade and the lives of early immigrant settlers.

eginning in the provincial capital, Regina, take Trans-Canada 1 west to Moose Jaw, which, during Prohibition, became a paradise for gangsters from across the U.S. border. The smuggling tunnels in this "Little Chicago" are now open as a tourist attraction. Head north on Hwy, 2 and turn onto the 202 to visit Buffalo Pound Provincial Park, where you can sometimes see wild buffalo roaming the hills. The park also includes the Nicolle Flats Interpretive Area, where wetlands provide a home for a variety of birds, such as grebes, ducks, bitterns, and coots. Return to Hwy. 2 and drive via Hwy. 11 to $Craven. \ Turn \ northon \ Hwy. \ 20 \ to \ Last \ Mountain \ House \ Provincial \ Historic \ Park, a former provisioning$ post for the Hudson Bay Company, where demonstrations reenact the life of a 19th-century fur trader. Pick up Hwy. 22 via Hwy. 99, turn north on Hwy. 310 (a gravel road), and then east on Hwy. 52. The Western Development Museum in Yorkton tells the stories of immigrants who settled Saskatchewan, drawn by the promise of free land and religious freedom. From Yorkton, take Hwy. 47 to Hwy. 247 through the most scenic part of the drive—the verdant valley of the Qu'Appelle River. A kiosk just above the road in the lower Qu'Appelle has information on a 950-year-old Indian burial mound. Old George's $Authentic \, Collectibles \, down \, Hwy. \, 9 \, in \, Whitewood \, is \, a \, prairie \, mansion \, packed \, with \, an \, a \, prairie \, mansion \, packed \, with \, an \, prairie \, packed \, with \, an \, packed \, with \, an \, prairie \, packed \, with \, an \, pa$ eccentric collection of antique furniture, toys, Native American artifacts, and more. Follow Hwy. 9 through Moose Mountain Provincial Park, a plateau of lakes, marshes, and forest, and continue to Cannington Manor Provincial Historic Park. Founded in the 1880s, $this \, prairie \, village \, is \, an \, attempt \, to \, re-create \, a \, version \, of \, English \, country \, life. \, At \, Carlyle, \, turn \, onto \, country \, life \, and \, country \, life \,$ Hwy. 13, heading west through flat plains back to Regina.

FROM: Loop route from Regina, Canada

ROADS: Trans-Canada 1, Hwys. 2, 202, 11, 20, 99, 22, 310, 52, 47, 247, 9, 13

DISTANCE: 575 miles (925 km)

DISTANCE: 575 miles (925 km)
DRIVING TIME: 6.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: May through
October

PLANNING: sasktourism.com



108 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

GOURMET ROAD TRIPS

BEYOND CALGARY

This remarkably diverse journey through southwestern Alberta combines the dazzling alpine scenery of the Canadian Rockies—dramatic cliffs, lakes, waterfalls, and valleys—with a fascinating excursion into the world of the dinosaurs.

fter exploring Calgary's many museums, head south on Hwy. 2 to High River. Cross Highwood River on Rte. 543, then pick up Hwy. 22 south to Bar U Ranch National Historic Site, an immense open-range ranch dating from 1882. Continue south, turning west on Hwy. 3 toward the Rockies and Crowsnest Pass, revered for its mining history and natural beauty. Double back to Pincher Creek, then turn south on Hwy. 6 toward Waterton Lakes National Park where the Great Plains push against the Rockies, creating a dramatic landscape of cliffs, waterfalls, lakes, valleys, and streams. Pick up maps from the visitor center and hike up nearby Bear's Hump Trail, which offers excellent views of the valley. From Waterton, Hwy. 5 crosses the prairie to Cardston and the Remington-Alberta $Carriage\ Centre.\ North\ on\ Hwy.\ 2\ is\ Fort\ Macleod,\ the\ first\ outpost\ of\ the\ North\ West\ Mounted\ Police$ and home to the Fort Museum. West of town is Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, where prehistoric peoples hunted by herding hundreds of animals over the cliff. East on Hwy. 3, Lethbridge, perched above Old Man River, is Alberta's third largest city, with several museums, including Fort Whoop-Up, which chronicles the 19th-century whiskey trade. Hwy. 4 leads southeast to Warner and the Devil's Coulee Dinosaur Heritage Museum, which conducts tours of a dinosaur nesting site. Head north on Hwy. 36, then northwest on Trans-Canada I, and follow Hwy. 56 to Rosedale in the Drumheller Valley and the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology, one of the world's finest dinosaur museums with a complete Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton. Return to Calgary via Hwy. 9.

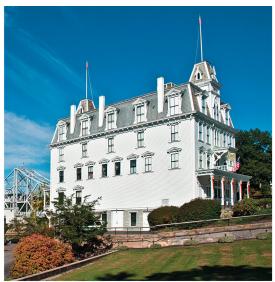
I Take Hwy. 544 off Trans-Canada 1 northeast of Brooks and you come to **Dinosaur Provincial Park** in the heart of one of the world's preeminent deposits of Cretaceous dinosaur bones. The area contains more than 200 bone beds that have yielded the remains of dinosaurs, crocodiles, turtles, flying reptiles, and small mammals, some of which are on display in the Field Station Visitor Centre. Interpretive tours of the area (mid-May through mid-Cotober), conducted on foot and by bus, are popular (book ahead). The fossil display buildings and five self-guided trails are open all year.



FROM: Loop route from Calgary, Canada ROADS: Hwy. 2, Rte. 543, Hwys. 22, 3, 6, 5, 4, 36, Trans-Canada 1, Hwys. 56, 9
DISTANCE: 750 miles (1,200 km) DRIVING TIME: 12 hours WHEN TO 60: May through September
PLANNING: Bring boots for hiking, tourismcalgary.com

The sun goes down on the ancient landscape of Dinosaur Provincial Park, home to hoodoos and beds of dinosaur bones





The Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam is the birthplace of musicals such as Annie and Shenandoah.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

The **Goodspeed Opera House** in East Haddam, restored in the late 1950s to its Victorian grandeur, has been the birthplace of many top Rroadway musicals

The Connecticut River Museum in Essex traces the area's nautical heritage through displays of model ships, navigational instruments, paintings, and a model of the American Turtle, the first submarine in the world to be used in battle.

Essex Steam Train and Riverboat run tours along the river on restored locomotives and riverboats, evoking the atmosphere of 19th-century

Thankful Arnold House in Haddam provides a glimpse into the daily life of Thankful, widow of local businessman Joseph Arnold, in the early 19th century. Tours take in the house and herb and vegetable gardens.

| CONNECTICUT |

CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY

At the end of its 400-mile (644 km) journey south from the Canadian border, the Connecticut River flows through peaceful farmland, past old towns and villages that once hummed with activity, and into Long Island Sound.

erched on a bend in the Connecticut River, Middletown was one of the biggest ports in the U.S. in the 18th century. From here, head east on Conn. 66, crossing the river via the double steel arches of the Arrigoni Bridge, passing through Portland, then continuing to the small village of Cobalt. Turn right onto Conn. 151, heading south, before turning onto Conn. 149 to the small riverside town of East Haddam, famous for its opera house (see Highlights). Pick up Conn. 82 and follow signs for Gillette Castle State Park, where the 1919 castle overlooks the river. Leaving the park, turn left onto Conn. 148, through the small town of Hadlyme, where a ferry has transported people and vehicles across the river for two centuries. After exploring the village, whose historic district includes some 18th-century buildings, return to Conn. 82, continue east, then turn south onto Conn. 156 and cross Eightmile River near Joshua's Rock. Continue through Hamburg and into Old Lyme, a historic town on Long Island Sound with grand mansions that were owned by 18th- and early 19th-century sea captains. Continue south a short way on I-95, crossing the river and taking the first exit onto Conn. 9, and then the second exit off Conn. 9 onto $Conn.\,154, toward\,the\,historic\,harbor\,of\,Essex, where\,in\,1775\,the\,first\,Connecticut\,warship, the\,Oliver\,Allower and Connecticut\,warship, the\,Oliver and Connecticut\,warship, the\,Oliver\,Allower and Connecticut\,warship, the\,Oliver\,Allower and Connecticut\,warship, the\,Oliver\,Allower and Connecticut\,warship, the\,Oliver\,Allower and Connecticut and Connecticut$ Cromwell, was built. Back on Conn. 9, continue north and turn west onto Conn. 148 and follow signs to Cockaponset State Forest, home to rare tulip trees. Back on Conn. 154, follow the river to the $picture sque \, town \, of \, Haddam \, and \, on \, to \, the \, Seven \, Falls \, Highway \, State \, Park, \, which \, has \, a \, waterfall \, respectively. \\$ and, beyond it, the flat stone slabs of Bible Rock, resembling an open bible. From the park entrance, take Conn. 9 back to Middletown.

FROM: Loop route from Middletown, Connecticut Roads: Conn. 66, 151, 149, 82, 148, 156, 1-95, Conn. 9, 154 DISTANCE: 56 miles (90 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 hours WHEN TO GO: May through October PLANNING: enjoycentralct.com



FROM: Franklin, North Carolina

PLANNING: blueridgeheritage.com

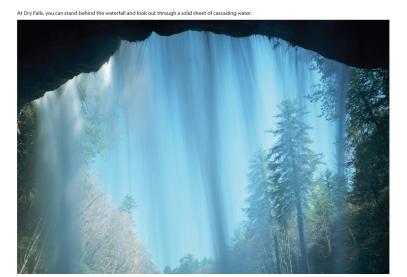
NORTH CAROLINA

CULLASAJA RIVER GORGE

This short, winding stretch of road in the southwestern corner of North Carolina runs upriver from Franklin through a narrow, steep-sided gorge at the southern edge of the Smoky Mountains, and past a series of dramatic waterfalls.

ranklin is a mountain town set in some spectacular scenery, and calls itself the "gem capital of the world" because of the ruby, garnet, and sapphire mines nearby (see Unexpected Pleasure). Pick up U.S. 64 here and head south through gentle countryside that gives no hint of the steep climbs ahead. After around 7 miles (11 km), the pastureland disappears and the road climbs to the towering granite mass of Higdon Mountain, then enters a narrow, curving gorge, Drive along the north side of the gorge, high above the Cullasaja River, navigating frequent sharp bends—there are places to $pull\ off\ and\ enjoy\ views\ of\ the\ river\ and\ the\ Nantahala\ National\ Forest.\ The\ first\ waterfall\ along\ the\ way$ is Lower Cullasaja Falls. It's unmarked, but the 250 feet (76 m) of terraced, cascading white water makes a marker unnecessary. You'll spot it easily, but there is nowhere here to pull off and park. The road $continues its \, mean dering \, ascent \, along \, the \, path \, of \, the \, river, \, between \, towering \, cliffs \, and \, through \, forests$ of pine, hemlock, and maple. At Dry Falls, get out and take the small trail that tunnels under the 75-foot $(23\,m)\,falls, where\,you\,can\,look\,out\,through\,the\,surging\,water\,without\,getting\,wet.\,Drive\,a\,little\,farther$ to come to the 120-foot (36 m) Bridal Veil Falls—an elegant spray of white water gives the falls their name. If you wish, you can drive along an old road that goes behind the waterfall. The tour ends in the $mountain\ resort\ of\ Highlands, the\ highest\ and\ wettest\ town\ in\ North\ Carolina\ and\ filled\ with\ mountain$ $flowers \ and \ lush \ foliage. \ It \ is \ also \ known \ for \ its \ antique \ shops, \ fine \ restaurants, \ and \ vibrant \ art \ scene.$

UNEXPECTED PLEASURE I If you'd like to try your hand at gem mining. visit one of the mines in the Franklin area, such as Cowee Mountain Ruby Mine (just off Hwy, 441, 4 miles/6.4 km north of Franklin), Gem Mine at Gem World (on Hwy, 441, 6 miles/6.4 km north of Franklin), or Jackson Hole (just above the Cullasaja Falis), Most mines sell buckets of gem dirt, and provide equipment for sifting through the mud as well as advice on technique for novices. They'll also help you identify your haul—which may include rubies, sapphires, garnets, and moonstones.



SHORE RIVERS, VALLEYS & CAN

1 CHEDDAR GORGE, ENGLAND

Despite its short length (3 miles/4.8 km), the drive along Cliff Road through Cheddar Gorge is packed with history, outdoor adventure, and yes, even cheese. The storied limestone chasm boasts two show caves, hundreds of rock-climbing routes, and a prehistory museum inspired by 9,000-year-old Cheddar Man.

PLANNING: Cheddar Gorge Cheese Company, at the bottom of the road, offers daily cheese tasting and factory tours. *cheddargorge.co.uk*

2 RIBEIRA DA TORRE, CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

The inland route between Porto Novo and Ribeira Grande on Santo Antão island skirts around the edge of Cova de Paúl volcanic crater and then snakes along the upper reaches of vast Ribeira da Torre canyon. The entire area is on the tentative list for UNESCO World Heritage status.

PLANNING: At acrophobia-inducing Delgadinho Ridge, the cobblestone roadway passes along a razor's edge with a drop on either side of at least 1,000 feet (300 m). turismo.cv/page/st-antao

3 COLCA CANYON, PERU

South America's grandest canyon burrows 10,730 feet (3,270 m) into the arid foothills of southern Peru. The road along the south rim runs past the Andean baroque-style Santa Ana church in Maca village and the Mirador Cruz del Cöndor, where the world's largest flying bird is often seen riding the canyon updrafts.

PLANNING: Colca is easily done as a 300-mile (480 km) looping day trip from Arequipa along highways 34 and 109. arequipa.com/colca-canyon

4 TIGER LEAPING GORGE, CHINA

Another of the planet's most impressive canyons, Tiger Leap stretches 9 miles (16 km) along the swift-flowing Jinsha (Yangtze) River of Yunnan Province in southern China. East Ring Road runs its entire length, between the towns of Hutiaoxia and Daju, with several places where drivers can park and ascend steep stairs to viewpoints along the river.

PLANNING: Rockslides sometimes close the road through the upper gorge, but the popular viewpoints above Tiger Leap Stone are always reachable. chinadiscovery.com/yunnan/lijiang/tiger-leaping-gorge.html

10

CANYONS& GORGES

For those with a head for heights, here are some of the world's most spectacular canyons to visit.

5 TARA RIVER CANYON, MONTENEGRO

More than 4,300 feet (1,300 m) deep, this Balkan canyon offers some of Europe's best whitewater rafting. But you can also drive a 28-mile (45 km) stretch of the gorge between Mojkovac and the towering Durdevića Tara Bridge, where Yugoslav partisans famously halted an Italian advance during World War II.

PLANNING: Much of the canyon is protected within the boundaries of Durmitor National Park with its many hiking and winter sports resorts. durmitornp.com

6 KALI GANDAKI GORGE, NEPAL

Curling around the western edge of the Annapurna Massif—home to the world's 10th highest mountain—the Jomson Sadak Road climbs high into the Himalaya via the Kali Gandaki Gorge. The route eventually reaches Muktinath Temple in the fabled Mustang region, an area closed to foreign—

PLANNING: 4WD is recommended for anyone driving this rugged, unpaved route; avoid the June-September monsoon season when the road is sometimes impassible. muktinath.org

7 DESFILADERO DE LA HERMIDA, SPAIN

Located in the Cantabria region, the limestone gorge has offered passage from the

OPPOSITE: Colca Canyon is a great place for a trek with a view, but its precipitous walls are not to everyone's taste.

north coast of Spain through the Picos de Europa range for thousands of years. Running beside the Rio Deva, Highway N-621 traverses the canyon via La Hermida village, where rural hotels offer a good base for trekking in the surrounding

PLANNING: Established in 1881, Balneario de la Hermida hot springs resort offers indoor and outdoor pools with water that reaches the surface at 140°F (60°C). turismodecantabria.com/inicio

8 ZION CANYON, UTAH

This mosaic of rock and water in southern Utah is the focus of one of America's oldest and most beloved national parks. Zion Canyon Scenic Drive meanders 6.3 miles (10 km) along the Virgin River past vertical landmarks like Court of the Patriarchs, the Great White Throne, and Temple of Sinawava, as well as the start of the road-end Narrows Trail through the skinniest part of the canyon.

PLANNING: From March through November, the scenic drive is closed to private vehicles; visitors reach the canyon on free shuttles from the visitor center. nps.gov/zion

9 GORGES DU DADÈS, MOROCCO

Carved into the arid foothills that separate the Sahara from the Atlas Mountains, the gorges are a red-rock wonderland spangled with Berber villages, ancient kasbahs, and orchards along the Dades River. Above Tidrite village, the roadway climbs quickly up a series of wicked switchbacks to viewpoints that look back across the charm.

PLANNING: Ouarzazate is the perfect base for launching an 8-hour day trip to the gorges, a 200-mile (330 km) round trip. visitmorocco.com/en/

10 BUNGLE BUNGLES, AUSTRALIA

Protected within the confines of Purnululu National Park in remote northwest Australia, these giant beehive-shaped rock formations are riven by dozens of redrock gorges and narrow slot canyons. The parks only roads lead to campgrounds and trailheads for Cathedral Gorge and slotlike Erbirna, Chasm

PLANNING: The Bungles are about a 12-hour drive from Broome, Western Australia, along the Great Northern Highway. parks.dpawwa.gov.au/park/purnululu



MISSISSIPPI BLUES HIGHWAY

Highway 61 follows the Mississippi River through the Delta, home of the blues. It became known as the Blues Highway because it is the route musicians traveled from the Delta to Memphis to escape their harsh lives in the Delta and seek fame and fortune.

he blues, which came out of America's Deep South in the early 20th century, revolutionized popular music, and its soulful tunes reached a much wider audience than the black community from which it emerged. Start in Memphis (see Stay a While), the home of Elvis Presley, whose immersion in blues music helped him evolve his unique rock-and-roll sound. Before leaving town, search out Wild Bill's, one of the coolest blues bars around, and take a walk through Beale Street, the city's thriving heart, where B. B. King and Howlin' Wolf made their names and which still has some great blues music. Head south on Hwy. 61—the Blues Highway—to Clarksdale, Mississippi, one-time home of John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters, and Ike Turner. The town has many authentic "juke joints" (blues bars), so take a look at the listings board at Cat Head, a blues music and folk art store, to see who's playing where. For a taste of what life on a plantation may have been like, spend a night at the Shack Up Inn, a collection of restored sharecropper shacks on the Hopson Plantation off Hwy. 49 outside $Clarks dale. \ The \ plantation \ also \ hosts \ many \ blues \ gigs. \ In \ Cleveland, \ 45 \ minutes \ south \ of \ Clarks dale,$ you can visit the old Dockery Plantation, considered the birthplace of the Delta Blues because of the influence of several musicians who lived there, including Charley Patton and Howlin' Wolf. At Leland, turn west to Greenwood, in the heart of blues country. Walk past the WGRM radio station on Howard Street, where B. B. King made his first live recording in 1940, before heading into the Greenwood Blues Heritage Museum and Gallery, which focuses on the "King of the Delta Blues," Robert Johnson. Return to Hwy. 61 and continue south to Vicksburg, an important Civil War city.

I STAY A WHILE I Spend a day exploring Memphis's musical past. You can take a tour of **Sun Studios**, often called the birthplace of rock-and-roll, but also famous for its blues history. **The Rock 'n' Soul Museum** in the Gibson Guitar Factory tells the story of the area's music pioneers who overcame racal and socioeconomic adversity to shake the world. The **Stax Museum of American Soul Music**, in the refurbished Stax recording studios, is dedicated to the rich bistory of soul in the area.



FROM: Memphis, Tennessee To: Vicksburg, Mississippi ROADS: Hwys. 61, 49 DISTANCE: 230 miles (370 km) DRIVING TIME: 4.5 hours WHEN TO GO: May, for the Beale Street Music Festival in Memphis

PLANNING: Allow time to enjoy performances at the blues joints en route. msbluestrail.org

Sun Studios is filled with memorabilia from the days when music legends such as Howlin' Wolf, B. B. King, and Elvis Presley recorded here





Gullies in Starved Rock State Park fill with water after heavy rains. The park's attractions include hiking, fishing, and bird-watching. The park's attractions include hiking fishing and bird-watching figure at the park's attractions include hiking fishing and bird-watching figure at the park's attractions include hiking fishing fishing fishing fishing figure at the park's attractions include hiking fishing f

ILLINOIS

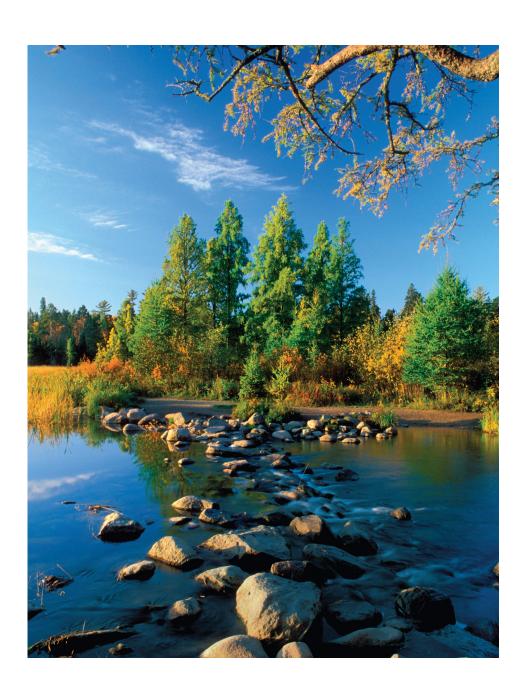
ILLINOIS RIVER ROAD

The historic Illinois River was an early water-highway used first by Native Americans and later by French explorers. This route through central and northern Illinois follows the river on both banks, passing parks, wildlife areas, and historic sites.

egin in the old city of Ottawa and head west on Ill. 71 to Starved Rock State Park to look at its canyons carved into sandstone bluffs. The park was the site of a 17th-century French fort, situated canyons carved into sandstone blutts. The park was the site of a full ventury 1 was across the river from the Grand Village of the Kaskaskia tribe. It gets its name from a Native $American \ legend \ that \ said \ the \ Illiniwek \ tribe \ was \ besieged \ and \ starved \ to \ death \ here. \ When \ the \ fort$ and village existed, much of the Illinois River was flanked by shallow backwaters and had a wide array of wildlife. Drainage has eliminated many of these areas, but some have been preserved. To see one, $of the \, Hennepin \, and \, Hopper \, Lakes \, restoration \, have \, brought \, back \, many \, birds, \, amphibians, \, and \, plants \, description \, and \, description \, descript$ not seen in the area for decades. Continue south on Ill. 26, 116, 29, and U.S. 150, which run on the east and west sides of the river respectively, passing mostly hillside bluffs and cropland as well as several more wetland areas. Ill. 29 traverses forested hillsides before entering Peoria, whose riverfront features plenty of restaurants, festivals, and concerts. From Pekin, on the east side of the river, travel $\,$ southwest along local roads to the historic town of Havana. Cross the river and turn north on Ill. 78/97 to the Dickson Mounds Museum, with exhibits showing the 12,000-year history of the Native $Americans \ in \ the \ Illinois \ River \ Valley. \ The \ neighboring \ Emiquon \ Preserve \ is \ one \ of \ the \ country's$ $largest\ floodplain\ restoration\ projects, and\ has\ a\ wide\ variety\ of\ flora\ and\ fauna.\ Return\ to\ Ottawa$ on the western bank of the river via U.S. 24, Ill. 29, and U.S. 6.

FROM: Ottawa, Illinois
TO: Havana, Illinois
ROADS: III. 71, 26, 116, 29, U.S. 150,
78/97, U.S. 24, 6, local roads
DISTANCE: 291 miles (468 km)
DRIVING TIME: 7 hours
WHEN TO GO: Late spring
through fall
PLANNING: Bring binoculars to
see the river's abundant birdlife.
Illinoisriverroad.com





GREAT RIVER ROAD

From a small trickle, the Mississippi River matures into the Great River, flowing for 2,552 miles (4,107 km) from Minnesota's North Woods to the Gulf of Mexico. This drive follows the first stages of the river's winding journey, starting in Itasca State Park.



The city of St. Paul has 26 miles (42 km) of Mississippi shoreline and extensive riverside trails.

In Itasca State Park, Minnesota's oldest, you can wade across the ankle-deep Mississippi River where it starts in Lake Itasca, and visit the Mary Gibbs Mississippi Headwaters Center to find out about the continent's longest waterway. From the park, local roads take you north briefly, past large boulders that were deposited at the end of the last ice age, and on to Bemidji, the first city of any size along the river's route. The Mississippi is just a stream here as it flows into the waters of Lake Bemidji, which, according to legend, is the footprint of mythical lumberjack Paul Bunyon. Giant, colorful statues of Paul Bunyan and his companion, Babe the Blue Ox, stand on the shores of the lake.

The Great River Road heads southeast past many lakes and angling resorts before traversing Chippewa National Forest and turning south at Grand Rapids. The river winds ceaselessly as you follow it on a series of county roads through croplands and on to Brainerd, and has widened considerably by the time you reach St. Cloud. Situated on the river's east bank, the Munsinger and Clemens Gardens are great places to take a walk before entering the twin cities of Minneapolis (see High $lights) and \, St. \, Paul. \, Both \, have \, an \, abundance \, of \, attractions, \, including \, St. \, Paul's \, Mississippi$ National River and Recreation Area, just down the road from the Science Museum of Minnesota. Beyond the old river city of Hastings, the route joins U.S. 61. As you wind among bluffs several hundred feet above the river, you catch stunning views of the Mississippi between steep headlands. At Frontenac State Park, south of Red Wing, trails offer broad vistas of Lake Pepin, which is popular with boaters; Lake City's large marina is a good place for sailing and jet-skiing. Watch for a roadside sign near Reads Landing marking Bald Eagle Bluff Scientific and Natural Area (see Highlights), as in winter you may spot a bald eagle around here. $Or you \, can \, try \, to \, catch \, sight \, of \, one \, at \, the \, National \, Eagle \, Center \, in \, Wabasha. \, Continue \, south \, through \,$ the 19th-century lumber town of Winona and on along bluffs above the river to La Moille, with a view of the Trempealeau Mountains. Cross I-90 here to La Crescent. For the last 20 miles $(32\,km)\,to\,the\,Iowa\,border,\,the\,byway\,follows\,Minn.\,26\,as\,the\,Mississippi\,\,widens\,into\,the\,Great\,River.$

 $\textbf{OPPOSITE: } Rocks \, mark \, the \, place \, where \, water \, spills \, over \, the \, banks \, of \, Lake \, ltasca \, at \, the \, start \, of \, the \, Mississippi.$

| HIGHLIGHTS |

In the town of Little Falls, just beyond Brainerd, the **Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site** preserves the house where the famous aviator grew up, and displays artifacts from his life.

The St. Anthony Falls Historic
District in downtown Minneapolis
includes St. Anthony Falls, Mill Ruins
Park, and Stone Arch Bridge, which is
the best place to see the Minneapolis
skyline at sunset.

Bald Eagle Bluff Scientific and Natural Area is an important wintering site for bald eagles. During the day they perch by the river to feed. Look for them in the upper branches of taller stands of cottonwood trees.

FROM: Itasca State Park,

To: lowa State Line south of La Crosse, Minnesota ROADS: Local county and state roads, U.S. ól. 1-90, Minn. 26 DISTANCE: 575 miles (925 km) DRIVING TIME: 8 hours WHEN TO GO: April through November

PLANNING: Unpaved roads may be unsafe in bad weather. greatriverroad.com





The Salmon River with the Sawtooth Mountains in the background

I IDAHO I MONTANA I

SALMON RIVER SCENIC ROUTE

The route follows central Idaho's largest river, the Salmon, north from its headwaters in the Sawtooth Mountains, snaking through canyons and gorges to the Idaho/Montana border, where the river swerves west.

rom the small city of Stanley, head northeast on Idaho 75, following the Salmon River as it descends into a forested gorge. The river drops 15 feet a mile (2.9 m/km) here as it comes down off the Sawtooth Mountains. It flows past several hot-spring pools between the river and the road and seeps into emerald-green and turquoise pools in the town of Sunbeam. Follow the river east, past $In dian\ Riffles, which\ overlooks\ former\ salmon\ spawning\ grounds, and\ on\ through\ small\ canyons\ that$ $get\ wider\ and\ drier\ as\ you\ descend.\ Beyond\ the\ old\ mining\ town\ of\ Clayton,\ the\ river\ turns\ northwest$ through a valley surrounded by desert hills. Approaching the junction with U.S. 93, you pass under a towering, rust-colored cliff over which Native Americans drove herds of buffalo. As you head north on $U.S.\ 93, past\ the\ town\ of\ Challis,\ watch\ out\ for\ pronghorn\ on\ the\ desert\ floor\ and\ hawks\ circling\ over-pronghorn\ on\ the\ desert\ floor\ over-pronghorn\ on\ the\ desert\ floor\ on\ t$ head. Soon you cross the Pashimeroi River and then pass the northern flank of the Lemhi Range. Approaching the ranching city of Salmon, the road and river cut through a narrow gorge that widens into a spectacular, high-walled canyon. Continuing north, the river plunges into the Salmon River Canyon, one of the deepest gorges on the continent. The Salmon River Scenic Route ends at the Idaho/Montan a border, but the drive continues west along U.S. 93 through dense forest to Lost Trail Pass (7.014 feet/2,138 m), named by the bewildered explorers Lewis and Clark in 1805. From here, you descend into the continue of the continu $the forested\ Bitterroot\ Valley.\ Approaching\ Darby, you'll\ see\ the\ high\ peaks\ of\ the\ Bitterroots\ to\ the\ left$ and the low-lying Sapphire Mountains to the right.

I HIDDEN HISTORY At Lost Trail Pass you can turn east onto Idaho 43 for 17 miles (27 km) to reach Big Hole National Battlefield. In 1877, during their failed attempt to reach Canada, the Nez Percé tribe crossed the Bitterroot Mountains into the Big Hole Valley, where the U.S. Army attempted to out them off, in the ensuing Battle of Big Hole the Nez Percé beat back the soldiers and escaped. The park is a memorial to the dead on both sides. From the parking area, walking trails take you to the Nez Percé Camp, the Siege Area, and the Howitzer Capture Site. Each walk takes about an hour.

FROM: Stanley, Idaho
To: Darby, Montana
ROADS: Idaho 75, U.S. 93
DISTANCE: 200 miles (322 km)
DRIVING TIME: 4.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: visitidaho.org



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FROM: Anchorage, Alaska

DISTANCE: 127 miles (204 km)

WHEN TO GO: June through

DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours

TO: Seward, Alaska ROADS: Alas. 1 and 9, Hope

mid-September PLANNING: dot.state.ak.us

Highway

SEWARD HIGHWAY

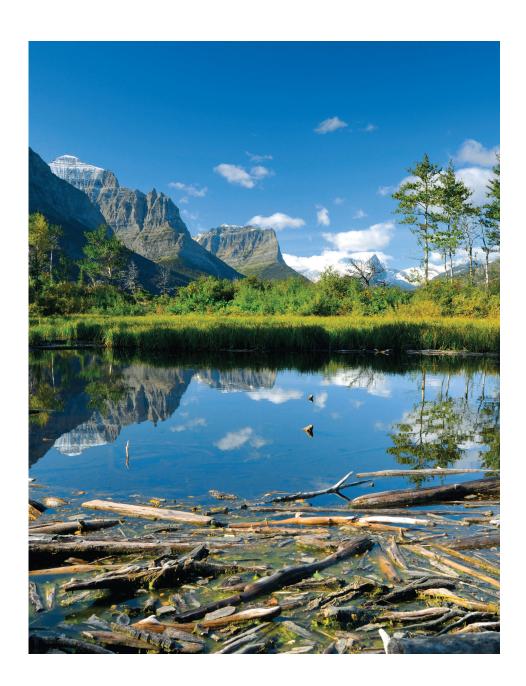
This scenic byway in Chugach National Forest in south-central Alaska takes you through the full glory of the state's natural wonders, including fjords, glaciers, mountains, lakes, $meadows, forests, and {\it wildlife-rich wetlands}.$

ake Old Seward Highway south from Anchorage, joining Alas. 1 at Turnagain Arm. Stop at Potter Marsh, a wetland of sedges and willows that is often teeming with fish and is a great place to spot a large variety of birds, as well as moose and muskrats. To the west stands the active volcano Mount Spurr; to the east are the Chugach Mountains, 13,000 feet (3,962 m) high and burdened with glaciers. Across Turnagain Arm, an extension of Cook Inlet, are the peaks of the Kenai Mountains and the spruce and hemlock of Chugach National Forest. A little farther on, you pass Potter Section House, a former railroad lodge now serving as the Chugach State Park headquarters. For the next 36 miles (58 km), follow Turnagain's northern shore. At Beluga Point, you can enjoy sweeping views and there is a chance you may see some of the white whales for $\,$ which the point was named. Continuing south, you'll pass Portage, a village that was abandoned in the 1960s after an earthquake dropped it below the sea level, and then Portage Glacier. Continue past $Explorer \ and \ Middle \ Glaciers \ and \ make \ a \ detour \ to \ the \ Begich \ Boggs \ Visitor \ Center, where \ you \ can \ find$ out more about these ice rivers. Hook around the end of Turnagain Arm, cross the Placer River delta and begin the ascent up the steep Ingram Creek Canyon to alpine meadows and the 988-foot (301 m) Turnagain Pass. You soon come to Hope Highway, where you can make a 17-mile (27 km) detour to the old gold-mining community of Hope. To stay on the byway, bear left and continue to Tern Lake $Junction, taking\ a\ left\ onto\ Alas.\ 9\ for\ Seward, soon\ passing\ Tern\ Lake\ and\ Kenai\ Lake.\ Farther\ on,\ the$ road runs beside the backwaters of the Snow River before arriving in Seward.

I EXCURSION I Just before you arrive at Seward, a 9-mile (14 km) road (open from early May through mid-November) takes you to Exit Glacier in Kenal Fjords National Park. Several short walks lead from the Nature Center to different views of the glacier, while a 0.5-mile (800 m) hike ends at the glacier's 150-foot (46 m) seracs, or spires, of broken blue ice along its base. A 5.5-mile (5.6 km) route takes you to the Harding icefield, the third largest







MONTANA I

GOING-TO-THE-SUN ROAD

Crossing Glacier National Park in northwest Montana from east to west, Going-to-the-Sun Road climbs from the fringe of the Great Plains to the Continental Divide, then drops into the lush rainforests of the McDonald Valley.



A beauty married in Clasics National Paul

he spectacular Going-to-the-Sun Road starts at St. Mary, just off U.S. 89 on Glacier National Park's eastern edge. The route heads west along the north shore of St. Mary Lake before curving through wildflower meadows bordered by aspen and lodgepole pine to reach Wild Goose Island Turnout, which has an elegant view of an islet dwarfed by mountains. About 5 miles (8 km) farther on, look toward the left for a short trail leading to St. Mary Falls, one of the loveliest cascades in the park, and for views across the lake of Virginia Falls dropping through the forest. Continue on through deep subalpine forest, where black bears red smittrals, marmots, and great horned only thrive to Jackson Glacier Turnout.

across the lake of Virginia Falls dropping through the forest. Continue on through deep subalpine forest, where black bears, red squirrels, marmots, and great horned owls thrive, to Jackson Glacier Turnout, where a sign explains how the glacier has shrunk considerably in recent years. A short drive on, the road breaks out of forest and onto a broad slope rimmed by mountains, including Mount Siyeh, and Goingto-the-Sun Mountain. Grizzlies roam the area and bighorn sheep and mountain goats graze the upper slopes. Approaching 6,646-foot (2,025 m) Logan Pass, the road edges round the cliffs of the Piegan Mountains, with sweeping views of Glacier's expansive mountain ranges.

From Logan Pass, you descend along Garden Wall, a knife-edged crest running down the Continental Divide that separates the Atlantic and Pacific watersheds, and come to Bird Woman Falls Overlook, with views of the falls framed by Mounts Oberlin, Clements, and Cannon. You can also see the deep, glaciated McDonald Valley. Next, traverse an area recovering from a 1967 wildfire, and then make a sharp turn to glide through the forest to McDonald Creek on the valley's floor. One of the most enjoyable short walls on Glacier's west side involves a stop at Avalanche Creek; pick up the short Trail of the Cedars from the roadside to the swift-moving creek, which winds through a deep gorge of boulders. A little farther on, several pull-offs provide views of McDonald Creek and the rapids at Sacred Dancing Cascade. After pulling away from the creek, the road drills through a dense forest, emerging at Lake McDonald Lodge. Lake McDonald itself is 10 miles (16 km) long, with several turnouts that have paths leading down to broad pebble beaches. At the end of the lake, follow signs to the village of Apgar, the end of the drive.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

At **Sun Point**, about 3 miles (4.8 km) beyond Wild Goose Island Turnout, a short path climbs to a lake overlook where a mountain-peaks chart identifies the main summits. The effects of glaciation—cirques, horrs, knife-edge creats, and broad U-shaped valleys—can be seen on all of them.

From the visitor center at Logan Pass you can hike 1.5 miles (2.5 km) to the Hidden Lake Overlook. A boardwalk trail climbs through a wide basin of rock terraces overgrown with wildflowers and ends at the brink of a spectacular hanging valley. This is a good place to spot mountain goats.

FROM: St. Mary, Montana
TO: Appar, Montana
ROAD: Going-to-the-Sun Road
DISTANCE: 50 miles (80 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Late spring
through fall (closed October to
early June)
PLANNING: There is an
admission fee to Glacier
National Park. Vehicles
longer than 21 feet (6.4 m) or
wider than 8 feet (2.4 m) are
prohibited between Avalanche
Creek and Sun Point.visitmt
.com/Glacier



OPPOSITE: St. Mary Lake is surrounded by the towering peaks of Glacier National Park.

ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

I UTAH I

ARCHES AND CANYONS

Southern Utah's canyons, chasms, arches, and spires, finely crafted over millions of years, are among the most dramatic landscapes in the U.S. This route travels through geological wonderlands, passing prehistoric and Native American sites.



From Mesa Arch in Canyonlands, you can see the canyon sides of Island in the Sky Mesa

LONG BEFORE
COLORADO, NEW
MEXICO, ARIZONA,
AND UTAH WERE
CREATED, THE FORCES
OF TIME WERE
BUSY CARVING AND
PAINTING THIS DESERT
INTO A GEOLOGICAL
PASTICHE OF NATURAL
WONDERS.

-JOHN ROSENTHAL National Geographic writer

Begin in Utah's spectacular Dead Horse Point State Park, 2,000 feet (610 m) above the Colorado River with grand views of the eroded cliffs, winding river, and bare-rock scenery below.

Follow Utah 313 to The Neck entrance road into Canyonlands National Park's Island in the Sky district and stop at the Grand View Point Overlook. The 6,080-foot (J855 m) ledge falls away to the rim of a basin filled with tall rock towers. Return to Utah 313, turn back onto U.S. 191, and enter Arches National Park to discover some of the area's most dazzilno scenery. From here, you can here.

take a short detour up Utah 279, driving past Canyonlands rock formations until you reach a sign announcing "Indian Petroglyphs," where viewscopes focus on ancient drawings carved into the stone by prehistoric hunters. Farther up the road, follow signs to "Dinosaur Tracks" to see some three-toed dinosaur footprints.

Now turn back toward the town of Moab, which is a good base for hikes, mountain biking, river trips, and outdoor adventuring. Around 35 miles (56 km) farther down U.S. 191, then right along Utah 211, you pass Newspaper Rock, a sandstone wall crowded with 1,500-year-old petroglyphs, Soon you'll

I A WONDERLAND OF ARCHES I Over hundreds of millions of years, the forces of nature have created a masterpiece: wildly shaped towers, fins, balanced rocks, and petrified sand dunes. And, of course, arches. The Arches National Park contains the world's largest concentration of them—some 2,000 arches, ranging in size from 3 to 300 feet (09-90 m) wide; included is Utah's signature formation, Delicate Arch. The IB-mile (30 km) Arches Scenic Drive provides access to viewpoints and a variety of trails, such as a short walk around The Windows section of the park, and the Dewil's Garden Trail at the end of the drive. Information on self-guided walking tours are available at the park visitor center.

reach The Needles District, a bewildering maze of red and yellow sandstone spires protruding high above the sandy mesas and flat valleys. You can find a shaded picnic spot with distinctive views at the end of Elephant Hill Road, off Utah 2TI. Continue south on U.S. 191 through Blanding (see Highlights), where the Edge of the Cedars State Park/Museum has collections of Native American artifacts and charts the history of the Pueblo, Ute, and Navioi peoples.

Take a left turn onto Utah 262 and continue to the Native American ruins of Hovenweep National Monument, which was a Puebloan metropolis from about the 5th to the 13th century. The square, circle, and D-shaped fortress-like towers were probably used for star-gazing, an important skill for agrarian tribes. Continue south on Utah 262, turn east on Utah 162 and Colo. 41 and then right onto US. 100 to Four Corners





Ancient petroglyphs cover the face of Newspaper Rock in The Needles District.

Monument, where Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona meet. People assume ungainly—and entertaining—positions in order to get a limb in each state.

The route turns west here into Arizona and enters the red rock country of the Navajo Nation, crossing open-range farming landscapes. Turn north at Kayenta onto U.S. 163. The road across Monument Valley is what makes vacation driving so special. Colossal orange, red, and vellow sandstone buttes tower overhead and sagebrush dots the desert floor for miles on end.

Crossing back into Utah, head north on Utah 261, crossing the zigzagging San Juan River with its 1,000-foot (305 m) deep canyon at Goosenecks State Park, before exploring Natural Bridges National Monument. The natural bridges of Sipapu, Kachina, and the world's second largest, Hopi, were formed by streams washing away the soft, underlying sandstone over hundreds of millions of years. Then take Utah 276 west through Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, where the 200-mile (322 km) long Lake Powell, the U.S.'s second largest artificial lake, offers water sports, hiking, camping, biking, and amazing views.

Take the ferry across the lake and continue north on Utah 276, 95, and 24 to see the bizarre mushroom formations of Goblin Valley State Park. These sandstone structures, many looking like mushrooms, some reaching 200 feet (60 m) high, are a geological formation unique even in this special part of the world.

FROM: Dead Horse Point State Park, Utah
To: Goblin Valley State Park, Utah ROADS: I-70, U.S. 191, Utah 313, 279, 211, 262, 162, Colo. 41, U.S. 160, 163, Utah 261, 276, 95, 24

DISTANCE: About 860 miles (1,384 km) DRIVING TIME: 18 hours

WHEN TO GO: Late spring through fall
PLANNING: Set out with a full tank of gas
and plenty of water. discovermoab.com

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Blanding is known for its Native American art and handicrafts. Watch tribe members work at Cedar Mesa Pottery, and purchase some handmade pots in the gift shop.

Take Reservation Road 42B off U.S. 163 to reach Monument Valley Tribal Park, near Kayenta, which includes more than 100 archaeological sites. An unpaved, 17-mile (27 km) loop drive starts from the visitor center.

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Moss-covered cliffs tower above Oneonta Creek in the Columbia River Gorge.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Bonneville Lock & Dam, on I-84, was completed in 1937 as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, and is a good place to look for the river's abundant salmon stocks.

Cascade Locks Marine Park, by the Bridge of the Gods, has a museum on the history of the gorge as well as trips aboard the stern-wheeler Columbia Gorge.

Horsethief Lake State Park, near Murdock, is a perfect place to pitch a tent, and has ancient Native American petroglyphs and pictographs.

The Maryhill Museum of Art, founded in the 1920s, houses a diverse collection of art from Europe and the U.S.A. and an extensive collection of Native American art and artifacts.

OREGON | WASHINGTON |

COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY

This drive through the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, near the Oregon/ Washington border, combines natural beauty, river views, waterfalls, mountain scenery, local history, wildlife, and 20th-century art.

rom Troutdale in western Oregon, head east on the longest original 1922 section of the Historic Columbia River Highway still in use. For the next 9 miles (14 km) the drive passes parks, farms, and small towns. At a pulloff at the Portland Women's Forum State Scenic Viewpoint, you'll catch your first view of the Columbia River, whose basalt cliff gorge is covered in dense foliage. Not far on is Vista House, the highest point on the drive, perched atop a promontory overlooking the river. The winding highway then descends through imposing forests to the river's edge, soon reaching Latourell Falls, the first of several impressive waterfalls along the drive. Eight miles (13 km) on, you can see Multnomah Falls from a short, steep, paved trail. Back on the highway, you're soon greeted by the narrow cliffs of Oneonta Gorge rising hundreds of feet above your head. The cool, moist conditions where the Oneonta Creek squeezes between the cliffs suit a wide variety of ferns, mosses, and lichens—some unique to this spot. As the historic section of the highway ends, continue for around 9 miles (14 km) east on I-84. Cross the river on the steel-strutted Bridge of the Gods (toll) into Washington and pick up Wash. 14heading east. Under the looming shadows of the mountains, the road passes small towns and wetlands rich with birdlife. To rejoin the byway that runs along U.S. 30, re-cross the river at White Salmon to the farming city of Hood River on the Oregon side, popular for its $or chards \ and \ wine ries \ and \ known \ for \ great \ wind surfing. \ Or \ you \ can \ remain \ on \ the \ Washington \ side$ of the gorge and continue to the Maryhill Museum of Art (see Highlights).

FROM: Troutdale, Oregon
TO: Maryhill, Washington
ROADS: Historic Columbia River
Highway (HR3O), 1-84, Wash. 14
DISTANCE: 90 miles (145 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through
late fall

late fall

PLANNING: Bring boots for hiking. traveloregon.com



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DRIVING TIME: 0.5 hour
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: To hike, you need a
pass from one of the Gateway
Visitor Centers. visitsedona.org

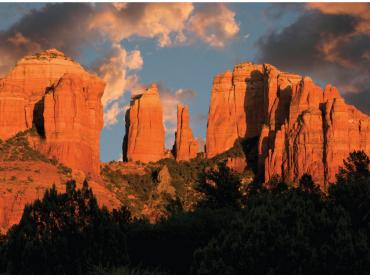
ARIZONA I

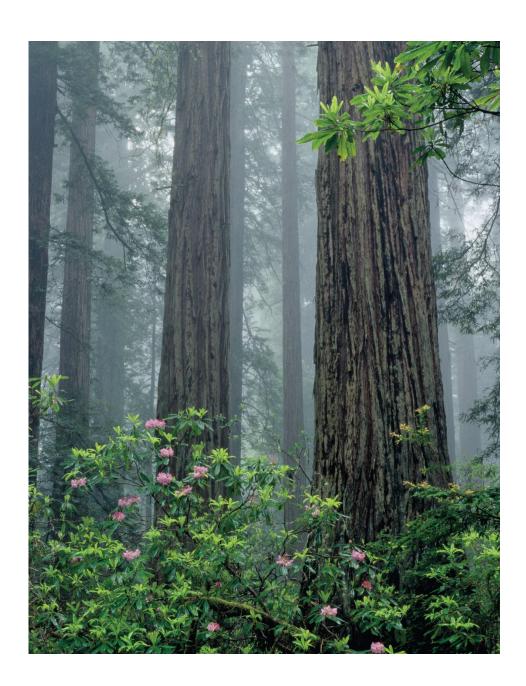
RED ROCKS OF ARIZONA

This short route winds through central Arizona's Red Rock Country, near the town of Sedona, a desert wonderland of massive, richly colored rock formations set against red earth and green juniper trees.

he rock formations south of Sedona are a happy accident of geology. Millennia of wind and water dug deep canyons out of the soft sandstone of the Colorado plateau and sculpted the rock into an endless variety of shapes, giving rise to names such as Chimney Rock, Rabbit Ears, and Cathedral Rock. The glorious red color comes from iron in the rock and is intensified when caught by the sun. The drive begins in the diverse Coconino National Forest, which has campgrounds and hiking trails through ponderosa pine forests and alpine tundra. From the inter $section\ with\ I\text{-}17, take\ Ariz.\ 179\ north.\ Soon\ you\ pass\ through\ the\ Village\ of\ Oak\ Creek\ (Big\ Park)$ on some maps), and will be in no doubt that the butte ahead is Bell Rock, one of the region's $\,$ most famous and recognizable landmarks, with its large and impressive bell-like shape. Some people believe that this is the site of a vortex, a spot where energy from within the Earth is thought to be conducted and amplified. Yavapai Indians, whose ancestors first roamed the region more than \sin centuries ago, believed that the red rocks were the bodies and blood of monsters slain by the shaman Skatakaamcha. Those mythical monsters included a giant bird that lived on a mountaintop-which some people say is now Bell Rock. To see Bell Rock and nearby Courthouse Butte close up, park at the $Bell\ Rock\ Vista\ \&\ Pathway\ southern\ trailhead,\ just\ north\ of\ Oak\ Creek.\ The\ trail\ has\ options\ for\ a\ short$ stroll and longer hikes of up to 4 miles (6.5 km). The road reenters the forest and continues past towering rock formations on both sides. A mile (1.6 km) farther down the road, the Little Horse Trailhead offers views of more formations, including Cathedral Rock to the west, which is revered by some Native Americans as the birthplace of the first man and woman. The byway ends at the Chapel of the Holy $Cross, a \ concrete-and-glass \ monolith \ tucked \ into \ rocks \ in \ a \ canyon \ to \ the \ east \ of \ the \ road.$







| CALIFORNIA |

LOST COAST AND REDWOODS

The little-explored route along northern California's Lost Coast takes you to Cape Mendocino and then turns inland to wind through redwood forests, linking up with the famous Avenue of the Giants in the Humboldt Redwoods State Park.



The village of Ferndale is famous for its beautiful Victorian architecture

egin in the historic Victorian village of Ferndale, just south of Eureka in the Eel River Valley. In the mid-19th century, the village grew rich from dairy farming, and the resulting building boom left a treasure-trove of Victorian houses and false-front architecture. Take Main Street (Calif. 211) to Ocean Avenue and turn left on Mattole Road (look for the arch that says Capetown) to leave town, zigzagging up slopes covered with maples and evergreens. Before long, a wide view opens up across forested valleys and grassy hills. The road then descends to Bear River and passes the Capetown ranch and a former stage stop. Continue down a precipitous stretch of road toward Cape Mendocino, the site of many shipwrecks. This is one of the continent's most active earthquake zones, where three tectonic plates rub against each other just off the coast.

For the next 5 miles (8 km) you drive south along a tidal zone that rose 4 feet (1.2 m) during the 1992 Cape Mendocino earthquake, giving the appearance of a perpetual low tide. In 1895, the state's first commercial oil wells were drilled in Petrolia, now a small community surrounded by farms. Continue on to Honeydew, which is no more than a store yawning in the shade. The road then climbs up to the 2,744-foot (836 m) Panther Gap, crossing the Mattole River on the way, and continues to Humboldt Redwoods State Park and Rockefeller Forest, home to many of the world's remaining old-growth redwoods, some more than 350 feet (107 m) high (see Highlights).

After crossing under U.S. 101, the Mattole Road intersects Calif. 254, known as the Avenue of the Giants, which runs from Pepperwood southward to Phillipsville. First turn left to reach Pepperwood, then turn around to complete the route. From Pepperwood, head south past the Drury-Chaney Groves, and then through Weott, a town surrounded by redwoods on all sides. At Williams Grove there's river access for fishing, and the park's visitor center has exhibits on local wildlife and history. You'll now drive along a stretch of road lined with redwoods, bigleaf maples, and black cottonwoods, with views of the South Fork Eel River to the right. Get a good look at the redwoods from the F. K. Lane Grove before reaching the end of the drive at Phillipsville.

OPPOSITE: California's coastal redwoods are among the tallest in the world.

HIGHLIGHTS

Just beyond Petrolia, you can take a 5-mile (8 km) drive along Lighthouse Road to the shore. From here, a 3.5 mile (5.6 km) trail (part of the Lost Coast Trail) leads to the nowabandoned **Punta Gorda Lighthouse**

From the Big Trees Area on Mattole Road you can take a short trail to the **Giant Tree**, which, at 363 feet (110 m) high, is the tallest redwood in the park.

The **Grieg-French-Bell Trail** and the **Drury-Chaney Loop Trail**, at the northern end of the Avenue of the Giants, both take you through old-growth forest.

FROM: Ferndale, California To: Phillipsville, California ROADS: Calif. 271, Mattole Road, Calif. 254
DISTANCE: Lost Coast 65 miles (105 km); Avenue of the Giants 31 miles (50 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round, but windring conditions.

PLANNING: Best driven north to south, for views of the Pacific. humboldtredwoods.org.



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I DOMINICAN REPUBLIC I

SAMANÁ TO SÁNCHEZ

This short yet very sweet drive through the Cordillera Samaná on the north of the island takes in sandy beaches around Las Terrenas and a mountain road with breathtaking views of coconut groves and the ocean far below.

egin in Samaná, a center for whale-watching tours, and take the turnoff for El Limón signposted 0.75 mile (1.2 km) west of town. The road curves uphill, offering the first views of Bahía de Samaná with the mogotes (eroded limestone hills) of the Parque Nacional Los Haitises on the horizon. The potholed highway descends to the community of El Limón, famous for its beautiful waterfall (see Unexpected Pleasure). Past here, turn right at the T-junction beside Santi Rancho and then, after 1.5 miles (2.4 km), left down a dirt road to Playa Morón, where fishing boats rest on the sandy beach. Return to El Limón and continue northwest to the shores of Playa Punta

Popy, whose windy beaches are popular with kiteboarders. When you reach the center of Las Terrenas, turn right onto Avenida Alberto Caamaño Deno. The road runs along the Playa las Ballenas, where you can snorkel in the clear waters. Then backtrack into town, following the one-way system along Calle Principal. Turn right onto Calle Fabio Abreu and follow signs to Playa Bonita, a nice place to linger with your feet in the water. Return again to Las Terrenas and turn south along the main road, heading uphill toward a ridge at the top of the Cordillera Samaná with a beautiful view of the coast. After the mountain village of Los Puentes, the road descends down sweeping curves and past a series of farmed valleys. You are now in the dramatic landscape of the mogotes, and views suddenly open up of the Bahía de Samaná far below. The island's largest coconut plantation stretches out beneath you. The road switch-backs sharply, with views of the foothills blanketed with palms, as you wind down the steep gradient onto Carretera 5 on the west side of Sánchez.

UNEXPECTED PLEASURE 1 You can take a horseback ride from El Limón to the magnificent 165-foot (50 m) Salto del Limón waterfall. Well-mannered horses carry you most of the way along paths, some of which can be slippery, and across rivers. Some hiking up steep, rocky paths is also involved. The journey to the falls takes about 40 minutes, and the entire excursion lasts three hours, so you can swim and relax once you're there. The trip can be arranged through Santi Rancho, a local tour operator in El Limón.

FROM: Samaná, Dominican Republic To: Sánchez, Dominican Republic ROADS: Local roads DISTANCE: 31 miles (50 km) TIME: 3 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Visit the Salto del Limón waterfall early in the day to avoid the crowds.









Swap your vehicle for a dune-buggy to explore the sand dunes around the town of Ica.

LIMA TO TACNA

The Pan-American Highway South forms the backbone of Peru's southern lowlands. This route follows it down the coast from Lima, then cuts inland through the driest desert in the world, passing ancient oases and pre-Inca sites, to the Chilean border.

egin in the Peruvian capital, Lima, and head southeast down Rte. 1. At San Vincente de Cañate, a short detour leads to the fishing village of Cero Azul, popular for surfing and the remains of pre-Inca mud buildings. Back on the highway, continue through Chincha Alta, where Afro-Peruvian folk culture thrives, and on to the city of Pisco, famous for the eponymous Peruvian brandy. $Pisco\ is\ Quechua\ for\ "bird,"\ and\ the\ city\ was\ named\ for\ the\ birdlife\ in\ the\ region.\ From\ El\ Chaco,\ south$ of Pisco, you can take a boat tour around the Ballestas Islands to see large colonies of seabirds and sea lions. Pisco was badly affected by the 2007 earthquake, with many buildings demolished. The road $heads in land \ now through \ arid \ desert, yet \ as \ you \ approach \ the \ can al-irrigated \ R\'{io} \ Ica \ Valley, the \ desert$ falls away dramatically. Wine and pisco are two of the main industries here, and there are plenty of opportunities to sample both. Ica was once the capital city of the pre-Incan Nasca people, and an interesting stop is the Museo Regional de Ica, which charts the area's history and displays an unusual collection of skulls highlighting some very early brain surgery. Just along the road, the oasis of Huacachina is a tree-lined lagoon dwarfed by sand dunes. This tranquil spot is a good base for touring the region's bodegas (wineries), and to try sandboarding. Continue to Nasca, where you can see the Nasca Lines and other ancient sites (see Hidden History). Past Chala, the road hugs the Pacific coast once again, before heading north at Camaná. At Repartición junction, head south toward Moquegua, a town with some $excellent\ 18 th-century\ wattle-and-daub\ architecture,\ before\ continuing\ to\ Tacna.$

HIDDEN HISTORY | The origins of the giant pictographs known as the Nasca Lines, which include a humminghid in flight, a whale, and a spider, are still a mystery to scholars. The images, some more than 656 feet (200 m) across, can be seen from a 40-foot (12 m) observation tower, but are best viewed from the air. Light aircraft leave from Masca airprot fally on 30-minute (fights. To the east of Nasca, you can visit the ancient aquedi of Cantalloc; to the west, the 34 Nasca pyramids of Cahuachi. FROM: Lima, Peru To: Tacna, Peru ROAD: Pan-American Highway South (Rte. 1) DISTANCE: 827 miles (1,330 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 days WHEN TO GO: Year-round, although the weather is best from December through March. PLANNING: There is an Afro-PLANING: There is an Afro-Peruvian folk festival in Chincha Alta in February, and a wine festival in Ica in March. Off the main road, other roads are mostly unpaved. peru.info





The 400-year-old Matsumoto Castle is one of the most intact and attractive castles in Japan.

JAPAN

ΤΟΚΥΟ ΤΟ ΚΥΟΤΟ

Whether adorned by the cherry blossoms of springtime or the snows of winter, this drive is a delight, taking in the beautiful Japanese Alps and the Sea of Japan coast, historic cities, hot springs, enchanting gardens, and culinary pleasures.

rom energetic Tokyo, take the Chuo Expressway west toward Nagano. Leave the expressway at Kofu City to see museums and temples, including Kai Zenjoki Temple, which was founded by the daimyo (warlord) Takeda Shingen in 1585. Continue west on the expressway and at Okaya junction take Nagano Expressway toward Matsumoto Interchange. The Matsumoto Kamikochi exit brings you to Nagano prefecture, home to the crumpled beauty of the Japanese Alps and the city of Matsumoto with its splendid castle. Matsumoto is also a starting point for hikes through the Japanese Alps via Kamikochi. Follow National Route 158 to the city of Takayama, where you will find a well-preserved Old Town. Next, take the alpine pass toward Kou Takayama Bypass, then Takayama-Kiyomi Road and Tokai Hokiruku Expressway. Stop off at the mountain villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama, famous for their Gasshyo Zukuri (traditional thatched houses). Continue north and at Oyabe Tonami junction take Hokuriku Expressway toward Kanazawa. The Kanazawa Morimoto interchange road and Rte. 159 bring you to Kanazawa City, where you will find Kenrokuen Garden, one of three great gardens of Japan. From Kanazawa, follow the Sea of Japan route along the western coast for glorious views and delicious seafood such as Ama-ebi (sweet shrimp). From Kanazawa, take Hokiruku Expressway and Meishin toll road. This portion of the drive nears Lake Biwa, the largest freshwater lake in Japan. Finally, take Rte. 1 into Kyoto, the

FROM: Tokyo, Japan
To: Kyoto, Japan
To: Kyoto, Japan
RoADS: Chuo Expy, Nagano
Expy, National Rte. 158,
Takayama-Kiyomi Road,
Tokai Hokiruku Expy, Ret. 159,
Hokiruku Expy, Meeishin toll
road, Rte. 1, local roads
DISTANCE: 261 miles (420 km)
DRIVING TIME: 75 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Pleasure boat rides
leave from Otsu port at the
southern tip of Lake Biwa.
japan-guide.com



130 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

former imperial capital city.

GERMANY

THE ALTMÜHL VALLEY

egin in the small town of Ellingen, which is dominated by a great 18th-century

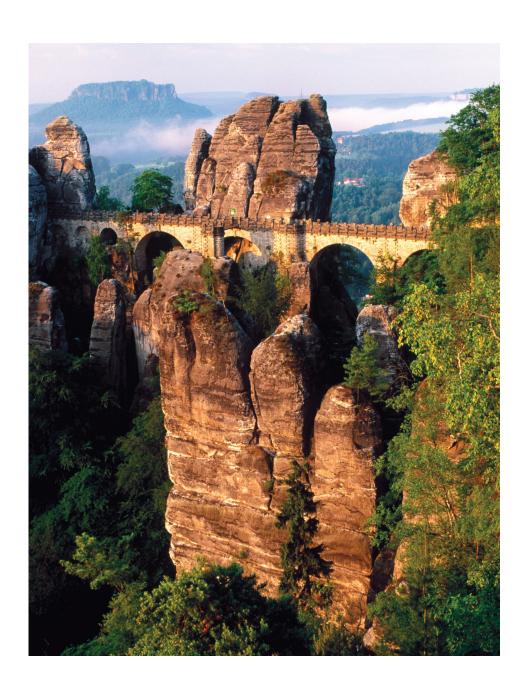
This drive in northern Bavaria takes you along one of Germany's most unspoiled river valleys. The Altmühl River cuts deep into a limestone plateau, creating a varied landscape of sheep-grazed pastures overlooked by limestone cliffs, interspersed with delightful towns.

baroque castle. Head south on the B2 to the enchanting medieval town of Weissenburg, which has a nearly complete set of ramparts and gateways and a well-preserved old town center, as well as the remains of Roman settlements. Continue south on the B2 for 7 miles (11 km), turning left at a railway bridge onto the road that follows the river through the Altmühl Valley. Pappenheim, much of whose center dates from medieval times, is dominated by the ruins of a 12th-century castle, and is almost completely encircled by a bend in the river. Beyond Esslingen, 6 miles $(9\,km)\,on, the\,river\,curves\,past\,a\,series\,of\,rocks\,known\,as\,the\,Twelve\,Apostles, which were\,once\,part\,of\,armorphisms$ a great reef in an ancient sea. Situated on top of a wooded hill, the white castle of Willibaldsburg dominates the approach to the elegant town of Eichstätt. Continue along the valley, past the village of Pfünz, beside limestone cliffs and under the A9 autobahn, toward the hilltop palace of Hirschberg in the old town of Beilngries. Beyond here, the Altmühl joins the Main-Danube waterway, a system of canals linking the rivers that flow to the North Sea with those that feed southern Europe and the Black Sea. Farther on, situated on a sheer cliff above the river, the castle at Prunn is one of the most spec $tacular\ in\ the\ valley.\ One\ of\ the\ drive's\ most\ pictures que\ vistas\ is\ just\ downstream\ from\ Prunn,\ at\ the$ $riverside\ village\ of\ Essing,\ which\ has\ a\ perfectly\ preserved\ watch tower\ and\ an\ ancient\ timber\ bridge.$ End the drive at the city of Kelheim, where the Altmühl joins the Danube and the Befreiungshalle, or $Hall\,of\,Liberation, keeps\,watch\,across\,the\,rivers.\,This\,neoclassical\,rotunda, built\,by\,Ludwig\,I\,of\,Bavaria,$ commemorates the part played by the German states in victories over Napoleon in 1813 and 1815.









THE VALLEY OF THE ELBE

This drive along the banks of the Elbe River in Saxony takes in historic palaces and castles, fine old towns, and the dramatic sandstone scenery of the National Park of Sächsische Schweiz (Saxon Switzerland).



Eighteenth-century Schloss Pillnitz has a beautiful riverside setting and fanciful architecture.

he Elbe is one of Europe's most important rivers, and its eminence can be seen in the castles and palaces gracing its banks. Start in Dresden, once one of Germany's most beautiful cities but destroyed by Allied bombers during World War II. Take the busy Bi72 southeast to the riverside town of Pirna, whose church has some intricate vaulting. Continue along the Bi72, turning right into Festung Königstein, a 18th-century fortress whose stone walls were once considered impregnable (see Highlights). Cross the Elbe to Bad Schandau (see Highlights), with a popular thermal sybotanical garden, and museum. Turn north on the S163 to the small village of Rathmannsdorf, and carry straight on at a junction. The narrow road (K8723) up through woods brings you to the hilltop town of Hohnstein, whose castle houses a local history museum and offers wonderful views. Turn west on the S165 here and follow signs to Bastei, eventually turning off the highway to the left. Walk up to the weather-sculpted sandstone scenery of the Bastei (see Highlights), a great natural curiosity of cliffs, crags, and pillars towering 1,000 feet (305 m) above the Elbe. To enjoy the pathways and their views of

the abyss beneath without the crowds, avoid visiting at noon. Back on the \$165, drive on to Lohmen, and take the \$167 to Schloss Pillnitz (see Highlights). This mock-chinese riverside palace was built by Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony, in 1720 as his summer residence; guests arriving by boat from Dresden disembarked via a stunning waterside stairway. Carry on up the \$167 toward Dresden, crossing the Elbe via the Loschwitz Bridge, or Blaues Wunder (the Blue Miracle), a steel suspension bridge built in 1893.

EXCURSION If you have time, take the little electric tramway that runs from Bad Schandau up the valley known as the **Kirnitzschtal**, in the eastern section of the **Nationalpark Sächsische Schweiz**. The tram runs along the Kirnitzsch River, through one of the prettiest Elbe valleys, past historic mills that have been renovated and turned into restaurants or pensions, and terminates at the Lichtenhain Waterfall. The journey takes about 25 minutes and stops at inns along the way.

OPPOSITE: The footbridge linking the Bastei rock towers provides extraordinary views of the Elbe River.

HIGHLIGHTS

You can walk up to the ramparts of Festung Königstein or take the shuttle from the parking lot. Whichever way you get there, the views from the top are magnificent.

The visitor center for **Nationalpark Sächsische Schweiz** in Bad Schandau is a conservation and geology museum that has exhibits on the park.

The hikes around **Bastei**, including the walkway across the sandstone **Bastei Bridge**, offer sumptuous views.

In the grounds of the waterside Schloss Pillnitz stand a church known as the **Weinbergkirche**, and the **Kunstgewerbemuseum**, which exhibits furniture, silverware, and wood carvings reminiscent of ships'

FROM: Loop route from Dresden, Germany ROADS: B172, S163, K8723, S165, S167, local roads

DISTANCE: 87 miles (140 km)

WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: Summer months
may be busy. A boat trip along
the River Elbe from Dresden
offers beautiful views of the

www.saechsische-schweiz.de



ROUTES DES ABBAYES

This route follows the north bank of the Seine River as it snakes westward through Normandy from Rouen to the coast, passing wooded valleys, chalk cliffs, and apple orchards.

ick up the D982 from Rouen, once one of the largest cities in medieval Europe and the place where Joan of Arc met her unfortunate end, and go west to the village of St.-Martin-de-Boscherville, where you can see the Romanesque Abbaye de St.-Georges. The abbey has a simple interior with a beautifully carved apse, and the remains of a 12th-century chapterhouse with superbly carved capitals. Continue on the D982 to Duclair, where you can gaze at fine views of the Seine before forking left to detour along the D65. Follow the meandering river past apple and cherry or chards around the old village of Le Mesnil-sous-Jumièges and you'll soon spot the great towers of the Abbaye de Jumièges standing tall above the distant trees. The atmospheric ruins of this once great monastery bear witness to a turbulent past. It was founded in A.D. 654, raided by Vikings in the ninth century, and rose to preeminence in the 13th and 14th centuries. The French Revolution brought about its downfall, and only the two 11th-century towers and part of the nave remain. Head $\,$ northwest on the D143 to the Fontenelle Valley and the Abbaye de St.-Wandrille (see Hidden History). Take the D982 west to the riverside town of Caudebec-en-Caux with its fine 15th-century church, then $take\ the\ D81\ to\ the\ village\ of\ Villequier\ to\ visit\ the\ Mus\'ee\ Victor\ Hugo,\ dedicated\ to\ the\ great\ French$ literary figure. Continue west to Lillebonne, which has some impressive Roman remains. The drive $% \left(1\right) =\left(1\right) \left(1\right$ ends at Tancarville's suspension bridge with stunning views of the Seine estuary.

I HIDDEN HISTORY The Abbaye de St.-Wandrille was founded in the seventh century by St. Wandrille, sacked by the Vikings, refounded in the tenth century, destroyed during the French Revolution, and revived again in 1951. It has a restored 14th-century cloister, while the atmospheric 13th-14th-century Gothic church remains in ruins. In the 1960s, the monks founded a new Church in 3 list-century wooden tithe barn. There is a guided tour most days of the year, If you enjoy Gregorian chant, time your visit to the abbey so that you can attend a sung Mass.

FROM: Rouen, France
TO: Tancarville, France
ROADS: D982, D65, D145, D81
DISTANCE: 51 miles (82 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: Mass at the
Abbaye de 5t.-Wandrille is held
weekdays at 9:45 a.m.
and Sunday at 10 a.m.
normandy-tourism.org

The Musée Victor Hugo in Villequier, in the writer's home, displays memorabilia about his life.





Carvings in the Ermita of Quintanilla de las Viñas include the figures of Christ and the Evangelists.

DRIVE TO ARLANZA

From its source in the Sierra de Urbión in northern Spain, the Arlanza River meanders westward through a dramatic valley to Lerma. This drive, which begins in Burgos, takes you $through\ beautiful,\ often\ wild,\ countryside\ and\ past\ old\ villages\ and\ medieval\ churches.$

eave Burgos on the A1/E5 south toward Madrid, crossing the Arlanza River after 22 miles (34 km). Turn off at the Lerma-Estación exit and follow signs to Lerma, entering the town through the medieval arch of Cárcel. Head up to and across the Plaza Mayor, graced by the austere Palacio $\label{eq:Ducal following Todas directiones signs). Turn \ right \ downhill \ to \ take \ the \ left \ turnoff \ onto \ the \ BU900$ for Santo Domingo de Silos. Drive through a landscape of rolling hills, wheat fields, and typical stone villages, until you reach the tiny hamlet of Santibáñez del Val. A right turn across the Ura River brings you to a charming little stone hermitage, the Ermita Mozarabe de Santa Cecilia de Barriosuso. Return to the BU901 and drive to the beautiful medieval village of Santo Domingo de Silos, home of the $Monasterio\,de\,Santo\,Domingo\,de\,Silos\,(see\,Highlights).\,Then\,backtrack\,along\,the\,BU900, turning\,north$ onto the BU901 through forested, rocky hills toward medieval Covarrubias, home to the 15th-century church of San Cosme y San Damián (see Highlights). Leaving Covarrubias, follow signs to San Pedro de Arlanza, on the BU905. Dating from the 11th century, this evocative site was one of Castile's $largest\,monasteries.\,The\,road\,continues\,through\,a\,pretty\,valley,\,crisscrossing\,the\,Arlanza\,River\,before$ joining the N234 at Hortigüela. Take a left here and drive 4.4 miles (7 km) to a right-hand turnoff down a narrow, twisting road past wheat fields to Quintanilla de las Viñas; take a right fork to see the $remarkable\ seventh-century\ stone\ chapel,\ the\ Ermita\ Visig\'otica\ (see\ Highlights).\ Return\ to\ the\ N234$ and turn right. Pass the cave houses of San Clemente before returning to Burgos, reconnecting with the A1/E5 at Saldaña de Burgos.

HIGHLIGHTS I

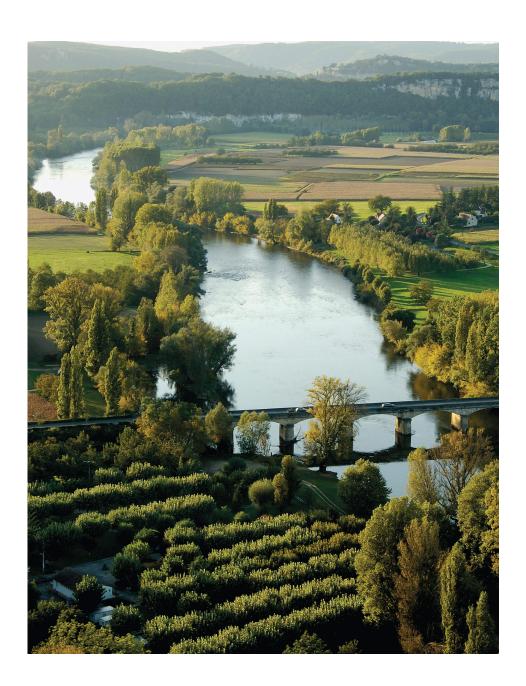
The Monasterio de Santo Domingo de Silos is world famous for its beautiful cloisters and the Gregorian chants of the monks, which can be heard at the daily Mass. Its museum has many treasures.

The church of San Cosme y San Damián in Covarrubias is an elegant white-stone Gothic building dating from 1474. The 400-year-old organ still plays, and the church houses a museum of papal documents, bishops' capes, and paintings.

The oldest religious structure in the region is the late seventh-century region is the late seventh-century Ermita Visigótica of Quintanilla de las Viñas, which is decorated with Visigothic carved friezes of grapes, birds, and monograms.

FROM: Loop route from Burgos, Spain ROADS: A1/E5, BU900, BU901, BU905, N234 DISTANCE: 89 miles (142 km) DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round turismocastillayleon.com





FRANCE

DORDOGNE VALLEY DRIVE

 $This \ drive \ travels \ east \ along \ the \ great \ Dordogne \ River \ as \ it \ flows \ through \ a \ region \ famous$ $throughout \ the \ world \ for \ fine \ food \ and \ wine, \ and \ loved \ locally \ for \ its \ wooded \ valleys,$ $historic\ towns\ and\ villages,\ and\ craggy\ limestone\ cliffs.$



A boat navigates the Dordogne River as early-morning mist hangs low on the water

he drive starts in Bergerac (see Highlights), where medieval houses grace the town center and FROM: Bergerac, France the old port spans both banks of the Dordogne River. Take the D660 east along the river's north $bank, crossing \ over \ to \ the \ Ch\^ateau \ de \ Lanquais \ at \ St.-Capraise-de-Lalinde. \ The \ structure-part-deviation \ deviation \ deviation$ medieval castle and part-Renaissance palace—sits above the village of Lanquais, and still bears the cannonball scars from the 16th-century Wars of Religion. To the east of the papermaking town of Couze-et-St.-Front, the village of St.-Front-de-Colubri is perched above the river, offering superb views of the Gratusse rapids. Cross back to the north bank for the best views of one of the Dordogne's extraordinary horseshoe bends, or cingles, at the Cingle de Trémolat. Take the D31 from Trémolat to the hilltop village of Limeuil with its Renaissance houses and 12th-century church. From here, follow the D51 along the cliff-flanked Dordogne, then cross on the D25 toward the Cistercian abbey of Cadouin, home to some fine Gothic cloisters. Take a small road east to Urval to see a huge 12th-century fortified church, and then return to the D25 and drive east to the river town of Siorac-en-Périgord. Cross to the north bank again, and take the D703E upstream to St.-Cyprien, a market town clustered around a 14thcentury church. Continue upstream on the D703; as the valley narrows, you can see the fortress

châteaus of Beynac-et-Cazenac and Castelnaud (see Highlights) high above you. Continue east to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and in places carved into, the cliffs linear to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and in places carved into, the cliffs linear to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and in places carved into, the cliffs linear to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and in places carved into, the cliffs linear to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and in places carved into, the cliffs linear to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and in places carved into, the cliffs linear to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and in places carved into, the cliffs linear to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and in places carved into, the cliffs linear to La Roque-Gageac, a village built under, and a village built under, a village built under, a village built under, and a village built under, and a village built under, a village built under the village built under th ing the riverbank, where you can relax in one of the riverside cafés or climb the narrow streets up to the 12th-century church for a good view of the river. From here, continue on the D46 to Sarlat-la-Canéda.

I HIDDEN HISTORY I If you turn south onto the D46 a few miles east of La Roque-Gageac, you come to **Damme**, one of the best preserved bastides (walled towns) in the area. Rerched high on a crag on the south bank of the river, the towns narrow strests and 17th-century marketplace are sheltered within 12th-century walls. The Belvédère de la Barre at the end of the Grand-Rue has views of the river and the main

OPPOSITE: The Dordogne River winds through farmland and vineyards below the hilltop town of Domme.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Bergerac is known for its tobacco, history, and wine. The Musée du Tabac documents the history of tobacco and its uses, while local wines are celebrated at the Maison des Vins.

During the Hundred Years War,

Castelnaud was an English
stronghold. It now houses a museum
on the history of siege warfare.

The 15th-century Château les The 15th-century Château les Milandes (south from Castelnaud on the D53) was the home of the 1920s American jazz singer Josephine Baker. The château has an exhibition on her life, and the park and formal garden are also open to visitors.

To: Sarlat-la-Canéda, France ROADS: D660, D37, D703, D31, D51, D25, D703E, D46 DISTANCE: 90 miles (145 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 days WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall. Summer is the busiest, and fairs and festivals are held at this

PLANNING: The Dordogne River offers many leisure activities such as canoeing and kayaking. bergerac-tourisme.com



RIVERS, VALLEYS & CANYONS | 137

ELEPHANT RIVER ROAD

Wondrous red-rock canyons and African wildlife are the twin allures of this drive through South Africa's remote far-east. Starting from the highlands of Mpumalanga Province, the route follows the scenic Blyde and Olifants rivers into the veld of Kruger National Park.

he old gold mining town of Graskop is the southern jumping-off spot for a wide-ranging drive through the South African bush that can be undertaken just as well in an ordinary car as a 4WD safari vehicle. The opening leg of the road trip—along the western edge of Blyde River (Molatse) Canyon—is called the Panorama Route (Highway 532) for good reason. Just north of town, the road hugs the edge of a 2,300-foot (700 m) escarpment to turnoffs for God's Window, Wonder View, and other spots with spectacular views of the lowveld and Kruger National Park in the hazy distance. There are also viewpoints for 260-foot (80 m) Berlin Falls and other cascades that tumble off the ruddy cliffs. The Panorama Route continues north through Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve and geological oddities such as the Bourke's Luck Potholes, the Three Rondavels, and the Precambrian dolomite artistry of Echo Caves.

Back on the surface, follow Highway 36 north through the tilted topography of Abel Erasmus Pass and hang a right onto Highway 527, which loops around the north end of Blyde River Canyon. There's a turnoff on Jonkmanspruit Road for those who want to hike the Hippo Trail or tour the canyon by pontoon boat or river tube. Otherwise, continue east on 527 to Hoedspruit, as fair center that lies amid the world's largest concentration of private game reserves. The Klaserie, Timbavati, and Umbabat reserves form part of the Greater Kruger ecosystem with the wildlife moving back and forth across the unfenced boundaries.

From Hoedspruit, Highway 40 makes a beeline down the Olifants (elephants) River valley to Phalaborwa, eastern gateway to the Kruger. Beyond the entrance gate, keep an eye out for the "Big Five" (elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion, leopard) as you make your way through the lowveld. The park road continues to the riverside Letaba and Olifants rest camps, where food, accommodation, and gasoline—as well as guided bush walks and game drives—are available. Be sure to check out Elephant Hall at Letaba, a museum that pays homage to Kruger's "Magnificent Seven" tuskers.



FROM: Graskop, South Africa
TO: Olifants rest camp, South
Africa
ROADS: Highways 552, 36, 527, 40
DISTANCE: 225 miles (362 km)
DRIVING TIME: 6 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: This drive is easily
combined with a five-day
backpack along the 37-mile
(60 km) Blyde River Canyon Trail.
sanparks.org/parks/Rruger/
maymalanac.com

There is no shortage of big game photo opportunities in the Olifants River valley, with African elephants particularly plentiful there



ALSO RECOMMENDED

• THE JAMES RIVER, VIRGINIA

In 1607, the James River opened up the American interior to the first successful English colonists. Follow the river from Richmond, along Rte. 5, to the reconstructed Jamestown settlement, then head to Yorktown, home to museums and a 1720s customs house.

dcr.virginia.gov

• MARK TWAIN COUNTRY, MISSOURI

Mark Twain grew up in Hannibal at the edge of the Mississippi River. Start at his boyhood home, move on to a museum in his honor, and end at the Mark Twain Cave, a spot that featured prominently in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Drive south on Mo. 79 to reach Louisiana's art galleries, then on to Clarksville, where barges still chug up and down the river.

marktwaincountry.com

• OAK CREEK CANYON, ARIZONA

From Flagstaff, follow the 12-mile (19 km) long and subtly colored Oak Creek Canyon to Sedona along Ariz. 89A. You'll reach points like Oak Creek Overlook, on a precariously projecting lip known as Mogollon Rim, where slanting walls of ponderosas stretch down to the river flowing along the bottom of the canyon.

americansouthwest.net/arizona/sedona

• CANADA HOPE TO KAMLOOPS, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

This is the route taken by 19th-century travelers who performed remarkable feats to cross the Fraser and Thompson canyons to reach the almost desert-like interior of British Columbia. Now, the 200-mile (322 km) trek is Trans-Canada Hwy. 1. The road traverses impressive geology such as Hells Gate, where the river gushes at unbelievable speeds and pressures through narrow, rocky walls.

canada.travel

• VALLE DE COTO BRUS, COSTA RICA

Hwy. 237 traces a deep gorge worn between the Talamanca and Fila Costeña Mountains, as it moves from Paso Real to Ciudad Neily, before climbing 11,660 feet (3,554 m) to towering Cerro Kamuk. Take the turnoff for Estación Tres Colinas, and at Jabillo follow signs to Coto Brus at the bottom of the valley. Continue upto high coffee fields and then through San Vito to connect with Hwy. 16. Admire herons and frogs in the nearby reserve before making your way back down to Ciudad Neily.

visitcostarica.com

• HUON VALLEY TRAIL, AUSTRALIA

Follow the Huon Highway through "greengold" pines, beloved of 19th-century shipbuilders, to reach Geeveston and nearby Tahune Forest Airwalk, where a walkway high in the treetops looks out across rivers and mountains. Continue the drive right into Hartz Mountains National Park, where you can explore and hike until joining the Channel Highway to Kettering to go through Margate and Kingston to Hobart, Tasmania's largest city.

discovertasmania co uk

• RUGOVA GORGE, KOSOVO

Bright purple wildflowers cling to dark granite walls rising 2,000 feet (610 m) above the Drini River at the bottom of Rugova Gorge. At points the rock actually arches over the pavement as engineered tunnels take the road forward and earth momentarily blocks your view.

• WACHAU VALLEY, AUSTRIA

From Melk and its fabulous baroque monastery, drive north along either Rte. 3 or Rte. 33, following the Danube River—one of Europe's longest rivers. On your way to Krems, you'll meander through the rolling Wachau Valley, a wine-growing region dating back to the Romans. The monasteries that dot the area were critical to the history of winemaking in Wachau—the monks oversaw the original vineyards and were the first to trade wine upstream.

donau.com

• RHINE VALLEY, GERMANY

The Bo follows the Middle Rhine between Koblenz and Mainz, a stretch of the river that is home to the valley's most majestic medieval castles, built here to levy tolls on traders plying the river. Riesling (a white grape unique to the region) vineyards cling to steep terraces along the slanting walls of

the valley. Visit Boppard to enjoy a promenade along the river and explore its winding historical streets.

cometogermany.com

• MARNE VALLEY, FRANCE

Wander the historic streets of St.-Dizier, whose secrets include fine examples of decorative iromovek by art nouveau architect Hector Guimard. Follow the N67/E17 south along the Marne valley, stopping in Vignory to admire the IIth-century Church of St. Etienne, an exceptional example of Romanesque architecture. Finish in Chaumont, sitting on a spur above the Marne. tourisme-hautemarne.com

CAMINO AL VOLCÁN, CHILE

The Maipo Canyon twists and turns through the high Andessoutheast of Chile's capital Santiago, following the course of the Maipo River and its tributaries, including El Volcán. From Santiago's eastern suburbs, take the Camino al Volcán deep into the canyon. Sights along the way include the Concha Y Toro vineyard and the town of San José de Maipo, with a pretty main square and good bars and restaurants.

chile.travel/en/where-to-go/central-area-santi ago-and-valparaiso/cajon-del-maipo

OVER-WATER BRIDGE, HUBEI, CHINA

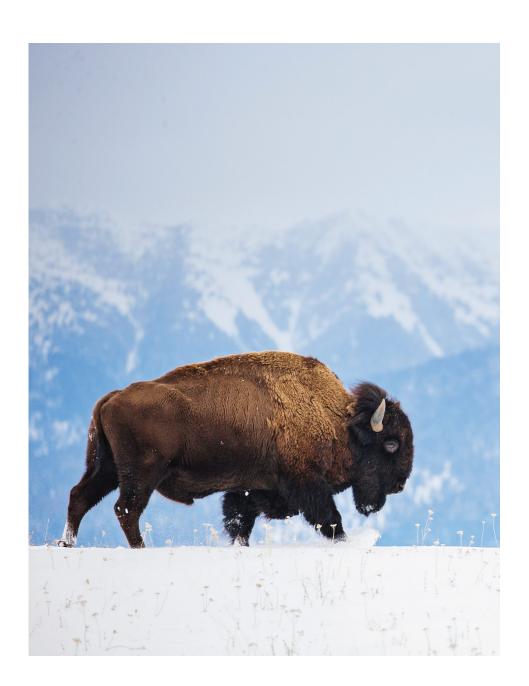
Sample the beauty of a remote mountain gorge in central China in a most unusual way—along a bridge that instead of crossing a river follows its course, running over the water for 2.7 miles (4.4 km). Opened in 2015, it is part of the short Guzhao Highway, which links Gufuzhen and Zhaoiun in Hubei Province. Its builders opted to build the stretch over the Xiangxi River rather than cause ecological damage by boring tunnels through the mountainside.

hinadiscovery.com/hubei-tours/things-to-do

FISH RIVER CANYON, NAMIBIA

Using Hobas as your base, drive across the arid, desert-like plateau of the Nama Karoo for 6 miles (10 km) until you reach the main viewing point of this 500-million-year-old canyon. Continue to the spa resort of Ai-Ais, where from February through October you can take a dip in the thermal springs.

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THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

or travelers with a true spirit of adventure, the back of beyond has a lot to commend it. Here lie the lonely highways and hidden byways leading to remote or little-known—but delightful destinations. Some lie just off the beaten track, overlooked by the crowds who flock to more famous $land marks. \, Others \, are \, challenging \, for a ys \, into \, genuine$ wilderness that demand a cool head and careful preparation, but that reward those who undertake them with a powerful sense of achievement. Under boundless blue skies patrolled by eagles, a high-rising route enters Montana's National Bison Range, where a $protected\ herd\ of\ the\ great\ beasts\ grazes\ undisturbed$ $in \, the \, company \, of \, wild \, horses \, and \, bighorn \, sheep. \, Deep \,$ in the rainforests of Costa Rica, a network of rugged and often difficult—dirt roads offers encounters with leatherback turtles, crocodiles, mangrove swamps, and jungle-covered seashores. For those eager to navigate one of the world's most formidable routes, complete with remote roads and the chance to experience fascinating cultures, there's a passage down the entire African continent—a spectacular expedition from the Egyptian capital, Cairo, south to Cape Town.

One of the bison of Montana's National Bison Range, with the dramatic backdrop of the Mission Mountains, which reach 9,820 feet (2,990 m) at McDonald Peak

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED | 141



Hikers admire the barren, rugged landscape of Gros Morne National Park

CANADA

CANADA'S VIKING COAST

The west coast of Newfoundland is a place of staggering elemental beauty, where you'll find ancient mountains, fjords, cliffs and crashing seas, beaches, forests, and windswept barrens alongside a panoply of wildlife and a history of human habitation dating back 4,000 years.

fter the six-hour ferry ride from North Sydney, Nova Scotia, leave Channel-Port aux Basques north on Trans-Canada I, past the stark, windy, and fog-shrouded Long Range Mountains. Beyond are the fertile wetlands of the Codroy Valley—the Grand Codroy Estuary Ramsar Site. At Hwy, 490, head west and cross the causeway to take the 85-mile (137 km) scenic loop around the francophone Port au Port Peninsula. Follow Hwy. 463 north toward Lourdes and Piccadiilly, past Long Point, and then turn southwest down the increasingly barren coast to Mainland (La Grande Terre). Descend to Cape St. George and return to Trans-Canada I via Hwy. 460. It's a scenic stretch north to the lumber town of Corner Brook, home to an art gallery, railway museum, and the Captain James Cook Monument. From here, continue for 30 miles (48 km) northeast through the strawberry-growing Humber Valley, then head north on Hwy. 430 to the beautifully wild Gros Morne National Park. Just beyond, The Arches Provincial Park has a triple-arch limestone formation by the sea. Farther north, explore the prehistoric Port au Choix National Historic Site, then continue through fishing villages, veering east at Eddies Cove. Turn left onto scenic Hwy. 436 and stop at L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site (see In Focus) 18 miles (29 km) north. Finally, visit St. Anthony and Fishing Point, a lookout for icebergs, whales, and seabirds, before returning to Channel-Port aux Basques.

IN FOCUS Norse explorer Leif Eriksson established a settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site more than 1,000 years ago—a good 500 years before Christopher Columbus reached the Americas in 1,462—making it the first hown European settlement in the New World. Today, the site focuses on three reconstructed Norse buildings, where costumed interpreters explain the life of the early settlers.

FROM: Channel-Port aux Basques, Canada To: St. Anthony, Canada ROADS: Trans-Canada 1, Hwys. 490, 463, 460, 430, 436 DISTANCE: 620 miles (1000 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 days WHEN TO 60: From mid-June through mid-October PLANNING: Take binoculars for watching birds and sea life, visitnewfoundland.ca



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GEORGIA I

CROSSING CHATTAHOOCHEE

Travel through the forested foothills, mountains, and valleys of northern Georgia's Chattahoochee National Forest, following the park's dramatic, wild river and climbing to the top of the state's highest peak, Brasstown Bald.

egin in charming Helen, a former sawmill town that has recast itself as a faux-Bavarian alpine community, before heading north on Ga. 17/75. Follow the Chattahoochee River through the community, before heading north on Ga. 11/15. FULLOW the Conditional Forest, one of the most productive hardwood forests southern end of the Chattahoochee National Forest, one of the most productive hardwood forests and the Chattahoochee National Forest, one of the most productive hardwood forests and the Chattahoochee National Forest, one of the Market National Forest National F in the world. At Robertstown, detour 3 miles (5 km) on Ga. 356 to the wilderness haven of Unicoi State Park and the beautiful Anna Ruby Falls, Back on Ga. 17/75, the road wends its tree-lined way beside Andrews Creek, becoming steeper and cresting at 2,949 feet (899 m) at Unicoi Gap. Beyond High Shoals $Scenic\,Area,\,turn\,left\,onto\,Ga.\,180, which\,climbs\,the\,lower\,slopes\,of\,Brasstown\,Bald,\,Georgia's\,highest$ $mountain, measuring \, 4,784 \, feet \, (1,458 \, m). \, Take \, the \, Ga. \, 180 \, spur \, to \, the \, parking \, lot \, to \, hike \, or \, be \, shuttled$ the last half mile (800 m) to the treeless summit (the bald) and the visitor center. Return to Ga. 180, and continue through some of Georgia's most spectacular Blue Ridge country before entering a rolling, $mountain-fringed\ valley.\ At\ Ga.\ 348, turn\ left\ onto\ the\ Richard\ B.\ Russell\ Scenic\ Highway, which\ follows$ the headwaters of the Nottely River. The countryside gives way to hills, then steep mountains, as the $\,$ road climbs to 3,480 feet (1,061 m), past Tesnatee Gap and Hogpen Gap, to the top of the Blue Ridge Divide. The steep, rugged drainage you can see on the left is Lordamercy Cove. Descending Piney Ridge, with views of the wilds to the right, you come to Dukes Creek Falls, about 4.5 miles (7 km) ahead, where a short trail wanders to an observation platform. Soon after, turn left onto busy Ga. 75A, which leads back to Helen.

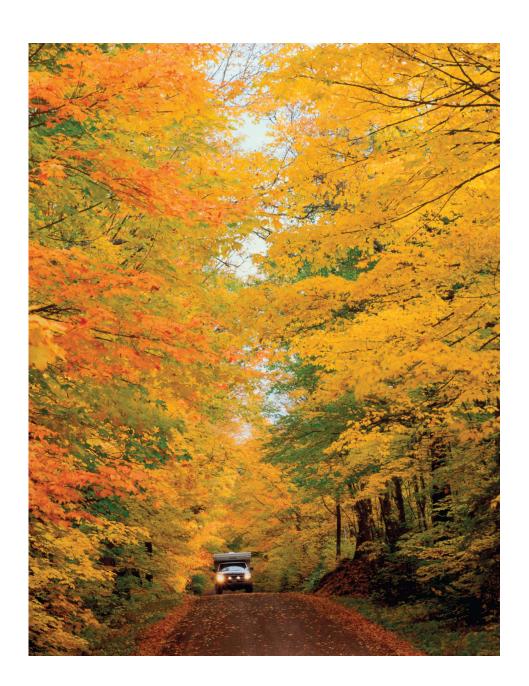
EXCURSION 1 The first gold rush in the U.S. occurred in 1828 in the town of Dahlonega, around 30 miles (48 km) southwest of Helen (via Ga. 9, U.S. 19, and Ga. 75). Several mines remain open as bourist attractions, including the Consolidated Gold Mine, where you can take a tour to experience what it may have been like for those early miners—you'll get to see original equipment used by the miners and can even pan for gold. You can learn more about the historic gold rush at the Dahlonega Gold Museum in the center of town.



FROM: Loop route from Helen, Georgia RoADS: Ga. 17/75, 356, 180, 348, Richard B. Russell Scenic Highway, 75. DISTANCE: 41 miles (66 km) DRIVING TIME: 1 hour WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall PLANNING: There is a shady picinic spot at Andrews Creek. Take boots if you plan to hike. byways.org

 $Cloud-filtered sunlight sparkles \ on ice-coated \ trees, with \ the \ dramatic \ Blue \ Ridge \ Mountains \ in \ the \ distance.$





NORTH SHORE LOOP

 $Marked\ by\ forests,\ lakes,\ and\ rugged\ shores,\ the\ northwestern\ coast\ of\ Lake\ Superior\ is\ a$ $chance\ to\ get\ away\ from\ it\ all\ in\ an\ environment\ where,\ over\ the\ centuries,\ humans\ have$ $struggled\ to\ harvest\ natural\ resources, from\ furs\ to\ lumber\ and\ minerals.$



One of Superior National Forest's gray wolves stares out from the sne

rive into Minnesota's great outdoors on Minn. 61 from Duluth (see Highlights), following the orthwest shore of Lake Superior. After exploring Gooseberry Falls State Park, with five waterfalls $and \, an \, ancient \, land scape \, of \, lava, continue \, to \, Split \, Rock \, Lighthouse. \, The \, coast line \, becomes \, more \, large \, continue \, to \, Split \, Rock \, Lighthouse. \, The \, coast line \, becomes \, more \, large \, continue \, to \, Split \, Rock \, Lighthouse. \, Lighthouse \, large \, coast line \, becomes \, more \, large \, coast line \, coast line \, large \, coast line \, large \, coast line \,$ mountainous around Tettegouche State Park and Superior National Forest, where you can pick up camping and hiking maps at the Tofte Ranger District Office. Sawbill Trail and other roads let you drive deep into the forest. Just before you reach Grand Portage near the Canadian border, visit the harbor area at Grand Marais and the Grand Portage National Monument (off Minn. 61), commemorating the 18th $century\ fur\ traders\ and\ explorers\ who\ toiled\ to\ reach\ this\ spot.\ Nearby,\ Gunflint\ Trail\ runs\ 63\ miles\ (102)$ km) west into Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Cross into Canada and head north toward Thunder Bay, a bustling lake port, where you can hike in Sleeping Giant Provincial Park (Hwy. 587) and visit Old Fort William, a reconstructed trading post from the early 19th century. From here, take Trans-Canada 11/17 west to Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park for spectacular waterfalls, hiking trails, and campgrounds. Continue west to the Dawson Trail entrance to the 1.1-millon-acre (454,154 ha) Quetico Provincial Park, whose ancient rock paintings are accessible only by boat. Head back into the U.S. along

 $Trans-Canada\,11\,to\,International\,Falls, then\,continue\,south\,on\,U.S.\,53\,to\,Voyageurs\,National\,Park, packed$

region. The Minnesota Discovery Center, off U.S. 169, is a museum and amusement park, while the Minnesota Museum of Mining in Chisholm's Memorial Park has traditional museum exhibits. Continue to Hibbing (Bob Dylan's childhood home), then take U.S. 169 east and Minn. 169 north to Soudan Underground Mine State Park (see Highlights). Continue east to Elv for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness for a paddle on the lakes. Finish up with a trip to the International Wolf Center (Minn. 169), where you can see a pack of wolves.

OPPOSITE: Fall brings a riot of flaming color to the roads across Superior National Forest.

HIGHLIGHTS

In Duluth, the Vista Fleet sightseeing cruise around the harbor passes the famous Aerial Lift Bridge. Also visit the marvelous Lake Superior Museum of Transportation, which displays classic trains, along with a recreation of Duluth's turn-of-the-

Explore the depths of the state's first Explore the depths of the states first underground mine at Lake Vermillon-Soudan Underground Mine State Park (which lies off Minn. 169). A caged elevator lowers you a good half mile (800 m) underground, after which you'll take a train ride into the deepest part of the mine. An underground phastic laboratory. underground physics laboratory also has tours.

FROM: Duluth, Minnesota To: Ely, Minnesota ROADS: Minn. 61, Hwy. 587, Trans-Canada 11/17, Trans-Canada 11, U.S. 53, Minn. 73, U.S. 169, Minn, 169 **DISTANCE:** 740 miles (1,191 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 days WHEN TO GO: May through October PLANNING: Permits must be

PLANING: Permits must be acquired months in advance for canoe trips in Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Quetico Provincial Park. northshorevisitor.com



WISCONSIN'S NORTH WOODS

Beginning at Lake Superior's southern shore, this tour loops inland south and east through woods, across tumbling streams, and past some wondrous waterfalls. You can fish on the rivers and lakes or hike the woodland trails.

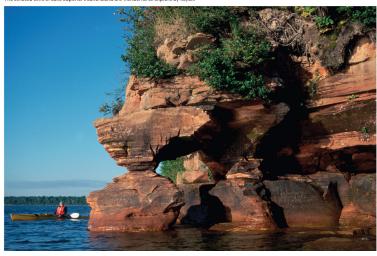
rom the lakeside city of Superior, it's not far south on Wis. 35 to Pattison State Park, where the Black River roars over Big Manitou Falls. This is your first taste of the North Woods, which stretch southeast toward Lake Michigan. From here, local roadslead to Amnicon Falls State Park, off U.S. 2, which has spectacular waterfalls. Drive east on U.S. 2 to Brule River State Forest, then head south on Wis. 27 to Hayward and the National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame. The route then heads east on Wis. 77 to the Great Divide National Scenic Highway, which passes for 30 miles (48 km) through densely packed maples and aspens as you drive through Chequamegon–Nicolet National Forest. Wisconsin Concrete Park on Wis. 13 is home to 250 life-size concrete figures embellished with glass and mirrors, and farther south and east on U.S. 8 lies Rhinelander Logging Museum, surrounded by mountains, lakes, and trails. Eagle River, north on Wis. 17, has a string of resort-lined lakes and is a winter snowmobile hotspot. Drive weston Wis. 70 and briefly on U.S. 51 to pick up Wis. 47 at Woodruff and reach the town of Lac du Flambeau on Lac du Flambeau Reservation. The George W. Brown, Jr. Ojibwe Museum and Cultural Center here exhibits Ojibwe indigenous people's traditional way of life. Continue north on Wis. 47 and U.S. 51, then $head west on Wis.\,77 \,and \,north \,on\,Wis.\,169 \,to\,Copper\,Falls\,State\,Park\,for\,trails\,along\,steep-walled\,canyons$ by the Bad River. Backtrack and follow Wis. 13 north to the Lake Superior shore. At Ashland, the region's story is told at the Northern Wisconsin History Center. Visit Apostle Islands National Lakeshore (see In Focus), just off the Bayfield Peninsula, and the fishing port of Bayfield. Return to Superior on Wis. 13.

IN FOCUS 1 The 21 islands of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore have provided refuge from Lake Superior's storms for centuries. There is plenty to explore, including Bayfield's Cooperage Museum, the Madelline Island Historical Museum and but stort, the wind-battered cliffs and caves of Devils Island, the 1881 Sand Island Lighthouse, and a restored fishing camp on Manitou Island. You can also camp, hike, fish, hunt, and kayak. Tour boats qo around the Islands.

FROM: Loop route from Superior, Wisconsin Roads: Wis. 35, U.S. 2, Wis. 27, 77, 13, U.S. 8, Wis. 17, 70, U.S. 51, Wis. 47, 169, 15, local roads DISTANCE: 500 miles (805 km) DRIVING TIME: 12 hours WHEN TO 60: Spring through fall PLANNING: Take boots, swimsuits, and anything elsey you may need for outdoor activities, including salling.

explorewisconsin.com

The striated cliffs of Lake Superior's Sand Island are wonderful to explore by kayak





The National Bison Range is one of the oldest wildlife refuges in the U.S., established in 1908 to protect the American buffalo.

MONTANA

WHERE THE BUFFALO ROAM

This scenic drive takes in outstanding alpine scenery with plenty of opportunities to glimpse western Montana's ample wildlife. You'll also see museums of pioneer and Native American history, towns with splendid Victorian neighborhoods, and a dinosaur dig.

o reach the forested Jocko Valley, take I-90 west of Missoula to U.S. 93 and turn north. At Ravalli, a detour west on Mont. 200 brings you to the National Bison Range, which has a protected herd of up to 500 bison. From Ravalli, continue north on U.S. 93 to an 1854 Jesuit log $mission\ at\ St.\ Ignatius\ Mission\ National\ Historic\ Site\ (off\ U.S.\ 93\ on\ Flathead\ Reservation)\ and\ continue$ to Doug Allard's Flathead Indian Museum and Trading Post to admire Native American art. Drive on to Pablo, whose People's Center interprets the region's past and present through Native American eyes. Just north of Polson, you reach Flathead Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake in the west. Go west around the lake on U.S. 93 past vineyards, Flathead Lake State Park, and Dayton, which overlooks Wild $Horse\ Island-noted\ for\ its\ bighorn\ sheep,\ wild\ horses,\ deer,\ eagles,\ and\ falcons.\ North\ of\ the\ lake,$ follow U.S. 93 through Kalispell to Whitefish and head east, taking the Mont. 40 cutoff to U.S. 2. Enter Glacier National Park from West Glacier and take U.S. 2, which is largely a canyon drive that skirts the $glacier's \, southern \, border \, and \, follows \, the \, powerful \, Middle \, Fork \, of \, the \, Flathead \, River \, through \, a \, scenic$ $corridor \ to \ East \ Glacier \ Park. \ Continue \ to \ Choteau \ on \ U.S. \ 89 \ and \ detour \ west \ to \ Egg \ Mountain \ to \ see$ the first dinosaur nests discovered in North America. From Choteau, follow U.S. 287 south to I-15 and take the exit for Gates of the Mountains, one of the Missouri River's most scenic areas. Back on I-15, $visit the state capital \ Helena, with \ many \ lavish \ Victorian \ buildings, then \ go \ northon \ I-15 \ and \ take \ U.S.$ 279 over Flesher Pass to Mont. 200. Visit Garnet Ghost Town (10 miles/16 km west of the junction with Mont. 83) before returning to Missoula.

FROM: Loop route from Missoula, Montana ROADS: I-90, U.S. 93, Mont. 200, Mont. 40, U.S. 2, 89, 287, I-15, U.S. 279 DISTANCE: 650 miles (1,046 km) DRIVING TIME: 1.5 days WHEN TO GO: Early summer to fall



THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED | 147





1 VICTORY BASIN, VERMONT

In fall, drive the Victory Road south of Gallup Mills. This part-paved, part-drit route crosses Victory Bain, where vibrant colors of broad-leaved trees—yellow birch, American beech, and sugar maple—are interspersed with sphagnum bog and stands of spruce. White-tailed deer spend the winter here, and watch out for moose and the rare black-backed woodpecker.

PLANNING: vtfishandwildlife.co

2 MOUTH OF THE DELAWARE, DELAWARE

Start at New Castle, founded by the Dutch in 1651, and follow Rte. 9 over the high bridge across the Chesapeake-Delaware Canal toward Penn Port, named for William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania. The road passes through salt marshes—be sure to visit Woodland Beach's tidal marshes, which have blue herons and snowy egrets. Also stop by Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge to see migrating birds before joining Rte. 8 to Dover.

PLANNING: fws.gov/northeast/bombayhook

3 CREOLE NATURE TRAIL, LOUISIANA

Passing bayous, marshlands, and beaches in the Louisiana Outback along the Gulf of Mexico, this 180-mile (290 km) routeraccessed via I-10—has been designated an All-American Road by the U.S. Department of Transportation. It crosses three wildlife refuges and a bird sanctuary. More than 300 species stop here, including tree swallows, kinglishers, orchard orioles, and yellow-billed cuckoos. On warm, sunny days, however, a favored local activity is alliqator spotting.

PLANNING: creolenaturetrail.org

4 VOLCANIC LEGACY SCENIC BYWAY, OREGON/CALIFORNIA

From Oregon's Crater Lake to California's Mount Lassen, this 500-mile (804 km) volcano-to-volcano route is a birder's paradise. In addition to showcasing volcanic and geothermal features, this drive takes you past Klamath Lake, where a million migrating birds stop each fall; Clear Lake, where white pelicans and double-crested cormorants nest; Tule Lake, where you may

10

WILDLIFE ADVENTURES

From wild swans to freeroaming horses, eagles to elephants and giraffes, here's our top 10 road trips for nature lovers.

spot a golden eagle; Crater Lake, home to great horned owls; and Bear Valley, which has the biggest concentration of bald eagles in the lower 48 states.

PLANNING: traveloregon com

5 WETLANDS AND WILDLIFE SCENIC BYWAY, KANSAS

Two of the largest wetland systems in the world are to be found at Cheyenne Bottoms and Quiviri. During spring migration, up to 500,000 birds put down at Quiviri, including impressive sandhill and

PLANNING: The route is 77 miles (124 km) long.

6 BIRDING IN HOKKAIDO, JAPAN

Start in the west of Japan's northernmost main Island with Lake Onuma, spectacular in fall with swarms of migrating birds. In central Hokkaido, whooper and Bewick's swans are among the 260 species that make their home in season on Lakes Utonai and Akan. On the Notsuke and Shunkunitai peninsulas in the east, scan the skies for white-tailed and Steller's sea eagles. From spring to fall, both peninsulas also host thousands of breeding red-rowned cranes.

PLANNING: For birding, late spring to early fall is

OPPOSITE: An alligator crouches by a bayou in Louisiana's Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, part of the Creole Nature Trail.

7 AVENUE OF THE VOLCANOES, ECUADOR

Flanked by huge volcanic peaks, the "avenue" stretches north-south, east of Quito. Start in the north with Cayambe and Antisana, pass 19,348-foot (5,897 m) Cotopaxi, then view Tungurahua, one of South America's most active volcanoes, from the safety of the spa town of Baños. Look for canasteros and tit-spinetails in the paramo grassland, while you may be lucky enough to see an Andean condor soaring high above.

PLANNING: June through November are the drier months. *thisisecuador.com*

8 CRADLE COUNTRY, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

Platypuses, spiny echidnas, quolls, and Tasmanian devili are among the animals you may encounter in this loop through northern Tasmania. From the coastal Narawntapu National Park, head inland for Mole Creek Caves and the waterfalls of Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clair National Park. Return to the coast at Lillico Beach for dusk, when its colony of little penguins return to their burrows after a days' fishina.

PLANNING: December through February are best for visiting. *discovertasmania.com.au*

9 CAMARGUE, FRANCE

Long-horned black bulls and white horses run semi-free through the Camargue, wild marshland south of ancient, artsy Arles. Here, too, congregate 300 species of birds, including flocks of pink flamingos, and soaring eagles, hawks, and harriers.

PLANNING: Stay in Stes.-Maries-de-la-Mer.

10 ZAMBEZI RIVER, ZAMBEZI

Victoria Falls, on the Zambezi River, marks the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. Heading south from Livingstone toward the falls you pass a viewing point on the side of the road, but the 5604-foot (1,708 m) wide cataract is best viewed from Victoria Falls Bridge. A short spin west of the falls brings you to Mosi-Oa-Tunya National Park, where you can drive beside the river and see the park's wildliffe.

PLANNING: The falls are at their most spectacular in March and April. victoriafalls.biz





Snowy peaks and blue sky reflected in a mountain lake add to the symphony of glowing color in the Alaskan landscape.

ALASKA

ALASKAN WILDERNESS

Although Anchorage has the modern amenities of any U.S. city, the rugged surrounding mountains are a constant reminder that wild country is all around it. This drive through southern Alaska takes in isolated communities, mountains, forests, and glaciers.

rom Alaska's largest city, Anchorage, head north on Glenn Highway (Alas. 1) through shrubby woodlands toward the wilderness. After 13 miles (21 km), make a detour east to follow Eagle River Road through Chugach State Park, where urban sprawl gives way to glacier-molded mountains, lakes, waterfalls, and forests. Back on the main road, continue a short way to Eklutna Historical Park, a preserved 17th-century, Russian-influenced Athabaskan settlement. Guided tours take in St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church and a brightly decorated native cemetery. Continue north through the fertile Mat-Su Valley, to the agricultural town of Palmer. Farther north, take a turnoff onto Archie Road for Independence Mine State Historical Park, a well-preserved early 20th-century gold mine. Back on the main road, follow the wide curves of the Matanuska River through broad, snow-capped mountains to

reach Matanuska Glacier—Alaska's largest road-accessible glacier. The highway now descends through scrawny conifers leaning at crazy angles, which give rise to the local name of "drunken forest." After the town of Clennallen, turn south onto Alas. 4 and past a lookout point on the Wrangell Mountains. Stop at the historic town of Copper Center, where you'll find the George I. Ashby Memorial Museum, full of pioneer and native artifacts. Around 10 miles (16 km) on at Willow Creek, turn east onto Alas. 10 and follow the Copper River southeast to Chitina and McCarthy Road. The main attraction along this 60-mile (96 km) bumpy dirt road, aside from beautiful scenery, is the wondrously isolated town of McCarthy. A footbridge across the Kennicott River is the only thing linking the road to the town, which is a great base for treks, river-rafting, or flightseeing trips deeper into the Alaskan wilderness.

FROM: Anchorage, Alaska
TO: McCarthy, Alaska
TO: McCarthy, Alaska
Roados: Alas. T/Glenn Highway,
Eagle River Road, Archie Road,
Alas. 4, 10, McCarthy Road
DISTANCE: 303 miles (498 km)
DRIVING TIME: 8 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: travelalaska.com



150 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

NEW MEXICO

INTO THE HEART OF THE SANDS

The distant, towering peaks of the San Andreas Mountains surround waves of ever shifting brilliant white sandy crests, making this southern New Mexico drive through the world's largest gypsum sand dune one of the most unusual in the southwest.

his drive through the white sands of New Mexico is a unique experience that takes you into the heart of one of America's true wildernesses. Before trekking into this harsh and demanding environment, stop by the visitor center of White Sands National Monument, which offers information about the unusual geological features of the area and tips on staying safe. The sands are created when the sun evaporates water from nearby Lake Lucero and Alkali Flat, leaving a thin crust of tiny gypsum crystals that the wind blows into dunes. In this devilishly hot and dry environment, species of mice, lizards, snakes, and scorpions have adapted light coloration to survive. The road skirts the edge of the dunes for about 3 miles (5 km), as saltbush encroaches close to the highway and fine flakes of sand float across the tarmac. On the left, the Dune Life Nature Trail, a 1-mile (1.6 km) hike up a 60-foot (18 m) dune, leads past cottonwood shrubs and offers the chance to follow animal tracks made in the sand, including those of the roadrunner. As the road pushes farther into the dunes, vegetation $gradually\ disappears,\ although\ you\ will\ see\ the\ occasional\ soaptree\ yucca\ plant,\ whose\ roots\ burrow$ $down\ as\ far\ as\ 30-40\ feet\ (9-12\ m).\ A\ little\ farther\ on,\ the\ Interdune\ Boardwalk\ Trail\ is\ a\ short\ stroll\ to$ view some of the sand's fragile wildflowers. In the heart of the dunes, swirling sand prevents plants from taking root (and the absence of roots causes the sand to swirl). At the end of the 8-mile (13 km) $road, wide \ pullouts \ provide \ ample \ opportunities \ to \ hike \ or \ sandsurf \ down \ some \ of \ the \ steep \ dune \ faces.$ The Alkali Flat Trail leads 2.3 miles (3.7 km) through the dunes out into the empty sands beyond—if you're looking for wilderness, this is it. The trail traverses wave-like dunes, and ends up at the Alkali Flat, the dried-up bottom of Lake Otero. If you can, stay until sunset, when fading light bathes the sands $in \, soft \, hues \, of \, pinks \, and \, blues, \, and \, lengthened \, shadows \, across \, the \, darkened \, dunes \, create \, an \, exquisite$ experience, evocative of an Arabian fairy tale.



FROM: Visitor Center, White Sands National Monument, New Mexico
To: End of the Alkali Flat Trail, New Mexico
ROAD: Dunes Drive
DISTANCE: 10 miles (26 km)
DRIVING TIME: 30 minutes
WHEN TO GO: Fall through

PLANNING: Bring water, sunglasses, and sunscreen. nps.gov/whsa

A soaptree yucca lives a lonely existence in the barren, pure white sands.



DELVE INTO DEATH VALLEY

One of the world's great desert realms is Death Valley, the hottest, lowest, and driest place in North America, where the fascinating landscape reveals vanished Lake Manly, which existed here more than 12,000 years ago.

his drive, slightly longer than the officially designated Death Valley Scenic Byway, starts west of Death Valley in Olancha. Head past the mostly dry Owens Lake, along Calif. 190, and climb 5,000 feet (1,524 m) to Death Valley National Park. Descend into the Panamint Valley, where $you\ may\ see\ low-flying\ military\ jets, before\ climbing\ into\ the\ Panamint\ Range.\ At\ Emigrant\ Compound,$ turn right for a trip up Emigrant Canyon; after 12 miles (19 km), follow an unpaved road past Harrisburg, a vanished boomtown, and the Eureka Mine to reach Aguereberry Point, which has dizzying views of the Black Mountains and Sierra Nevada. Return to the highway and drive into Death Valley and tiny $Stovepipe\ Wells\ Village.\ At\ Mosaic\ Canyon,\ up\ a\ 2-mile\ (3\ km)\ long\ gravel\ road,\ you\ can\ walk\ through$ halls of breccia and white marble that were carved out by an ancient river. Drive on to the junction where Calif. 190 turns south; take a short detour to Scotty's Castle, a 19th-century villa, or continue to the turnoff for Salt Creek. Along a short nature trail at the creek, you'll see tiny desert pupfish whose ancestors swam here tens of thousands of years ago. From Furnace Creek—home to natural springs, $\,$ date palms, a visitor center, and a golf course-drive 9 miles (14.5 km) south on Badwater Road for a walk in Golden Canyon, then on to Devil's Golf Course and Badwater (see In Focus). Back on the highway, turn right to Zabriskie Point and walk to an overlook of tilted and eroded badlands created by ancient lake beds. Continue on Calif. 190 until you reach a turnoff for a 13-mile $(21\,\mathrm{km})$ side trip to Dante's View, 5.463 feet $(1.665\,\mathrm{m})$ above the valley, for a spectacular lookout. Return to the highway and turn right: the drive ends at Death Valley Junction.

IN FOCUS The loop detour to Badwater takes in several fascinating sites: Devil's Gelf Course (a jumble of rock-hard salt pinnacles) and pools that, at 279 feet (85 m) below sea level, are saltier than the ocean. One-way Artists Drive, best seen at sunset, winds for 10 miles (16 km) back to the highway through terain that is streaked with iron oxides (red, yellow, pink) and volcanic minerals (green, purple), and then through canyons cut into the valley's many alluvial flare).



FROM: Olancha, California To: Death Valley Junction, California ROADS: Calif. 190, Badwater Road DISTANCE: 130 miles (209 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round, but

summer is extremely hot
PLANNING: Carry plenty of
drinking water and set out
with a full tank of gas.
visitcalifornia.com









A farmer drives an ox-drawn cart, still a common sight in the region around Holguín.

CUBAN BYWAYS

Dipping down to the shore and into the lush vales of eastern Cuba's Alturas de Maniabón mountains, Rte. 6-241 is one of the island's most picturesque roads, carving a path through a landscape of irregular limestone hummocks (mogotes) and ridges.

rom the suburbs of Holguín, drive east onto Avenida XX Anniversario to reach Rte. 6-241. The road soon begins to dip and rise through an open country of thatched huts, cacti, and steep-faced mogotes. About 20 miles (34 km) on, detour left at Rafael Freyre to Frey Benito, and turn right for $Parque\ Monumento\ Nacional\ Bariay, where\ Christopher\ Columbus\ landed\ in\ 1492.\ Backtrack\ to\ Rafael$ Freyre, which has a sugar and steam train museum, and continue northeast past the Bahía de Naranjo nature park to the popular resort of Guardalavaca. The road immediately heads south and cuts inland over the northernmost *mogotes* of the Alturas de Maniabón mountains. At Yaguajay, turn right at the sign for Museo Aborigen Chorro de Maita, Cuba's largest pre-Columbian archaeological site. Back on Rte. 6-241, the road drops down to the village of Cañadón in the Valle de Samá. Tousled royal palms stand sentry over lime-green tobacco fields backed by rounded hills on the road south, with freestanding knolls towering over the highway. The snaking road deposits you 18 miles (29 km) beyond Guardalavaca, on a broad plain that sweeps east to the Bahía de Banes. Follow the road as it curves eastward to Banes, past lush green sugarcane that ripples in the breeze. In Banes, you can swim with dolphins and visit the church of Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de la Caridad, where Fidel Castro was married in 1948. The Museo Indocubano Baní has a collection of pre-Columbian artifacts, including a $unique\ gold\ figurine\ with\ a\ feather\ headdress.\ The\ town's\ wooden\ and\ concrete\ houses\ are\ full\ of\ color,$ $and the numerous \ classic \ U.S. \ cars \ add \ plenty \ of \ character, so \ it's \ a \ delight \ just \ to \ walk \ around \ the \ town$ and soak up the Cuban atmosphere.

FROM: Holguín, Cuba To: Banes, Cuba ROADS: Avenida XX Anniversario, Rte. 6-241, local roads DISTANCE: 60 miles (96 km) **DRIVING TIME: 4.5 hours** WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall PLANNING: Take your swimsuit; be prepared for potholes, oxdrawn carts, and bicycles on the road. cubatravel.cu





A local worker climbs the steep slopes rising from the startling blue waters of Lake Atitlán, the deepest lake in Central America.

GUATEMALA |

VILLAGES AND VOLCANOES

The volcanoes of central Guatemala stand watch over a landscape of gentle hills, elegant coffee plantations, and one of the world's most beautiful lakes, as well as fascinating colonial towns and quaint villages.

rom Antigua (see In Focus), head south on Ruta Nacional 14, which runs between the towering Volcano Agua and the smoking Volcano Fuego, to the industrialized city of Escuintla. From here, head west on C.A. 2 through small farming communities, then turn north onto Ruta Nacional 11 at Cocales. Soon you'll reach the beautiful lodge at Los Tarrales Natural Reserve, which stands in the lee of two 11,000-foot (3,353 m) volcanoes. Stay the night and then return to Cocales before heading toward the town of Chicacao, turning off the highway and down a cobblestone lane toward Santiago Atitlán. This takes you along the old Camino Real, built on top of Indian footpaths by conquistadores to link Mexico City with their outer territories. Several hours and many steep mountain roads later, you'll reach Santiago Atitlán in the southern highlands, on the shores of Lake Atitlán, a flooded caldera that is regarded as one of the world's most beautiful lakes and is surrounded by picture-perfect volcanic cones. The town is startlingly barren, yet somehow compelling, and crowded with local Tzutujil Indians in colorful dress.

IN FOCUS | The Spanish ordered the former colonial capital of La Antigua Guatemala to be abandoned in 1776, after earthquakes had wrecked the city, yet not everyone left. Today it remains full of historic buildings, such as the 17th-century San José Cathedral and the 16th-century Church San Francisco, the old colonial streets are a delight to explore. The Parque Central is also worth a visit, and El Mercado, a maze-like market, has everything from gifts to livestock.

Like the massive Catholic church built in 1547 with stones taken from Maya temples, local religious beliefs and rituals are a mixture of both cultures.

FROM: Antigua, Guatemala
TO: Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala
ROADS: Ruta Nacional 14, C.A. 2,
Ruta Nacional 11, local roads
DISTANCE: 105 miles (168 km)
DRIVING TIME: 4 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: www.atitlan.com



154 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

COSTA RICA

COSTA RICAN COAST

This challenging drive along the rugged southwestern shore of the Nicoya Peninsula is one of Costa Rica's best adventures, but it is not for the fainthearted. The rutted dirt road clambers over mountainous headlands and along crocodile-infested rivers.

on't leave the funky fishing hamlet of Sámara in anything less than a sturdy vehicle appropriate for the bumpy road ahead. The stretch of Hwy. 160 to Estrada is paved, running inland and parallel to the coast by the white sands of Playa Carrillo. The fun begins beyond Playa Islita, where leatherback and Ridley turtles nest along the jungled shore, as a narrow dirt track $begins\ a\ stiff\ climb\ that\ would\ challenge\ even\ a\ go at.\ It\ then\ spirals\ down\ to\ the\ hamlet\ of\ Islita\\ --home$ to the Open-Air Contemporary Art Museum-and climbs again over Punta Barranquilla before swooping down to Playa Corozalito. The road continues to run inland parallel to the shore, which is backed by wetland swamps teeming with wildlife, on past Playa Bejuco, the hamlet of Pueblo Nuevo, $and \ Playa \ Coyote, toward \ the \ cross roads \ of San \ Francisco \ de \ Coyote. \ Here, the going begins to get tricky.$ The unpaved road heads southeast along the Río Jabillo and is subject to flooding, but as long as you avoid the wildlife-filled mangroves (home to crocodiles, snakes, turtles, and egrets), you should get $through. \ After twisting for 4 miles (6 km), turn \ right at the Y-fork. \ This will bring you to the R\'{i}o Bongo,$ $a shallow crossing that will make your heart race. A little beyond the river, you will pass Salon\,La\,Perla$ India at a road junction. Drive inland back across the Río Aria to Bajos de Ario, and drive 300 feet (90 m) upriver to the hamlet of Betel. Turn right, and after 1.5 miles (2.5 km), you'll reach Bello Horizonte. The rough-and-ready track claws over Punta Pochote and follows Playa Santa Teresa. Beware of deep $\,$ mud after rain. Keep straight to arrive at the offbeat surf resort of Malpaís.

I EXCURSION I A short drive south of Malpais is **Cabo Blanco Nature Reserve**, at the peninsula's southern tip. The reserve was Costa Rica's first, established in '963, and covers 2,896 acres (1172 ha) of mostly moisit tropical forest. There is plenty of wildlife here, such as white-tailed deer, pacas, armadillos, coyotes, porcupines, and raccoons. There are also two hiking trails: the short Danes Trail and the longer Sueco Trail that winds through the forest and drops down to the beach.



FROM: Sámara, Costa Rica

TO: Malpais, Costa Rica Roads: Hwy. 160, rough dirt roads DISTANCE: 57 miles (91 km) DRIVING TIME: 4 hours (one way) WHEN TO GO: The dry season (Obecember through Aprili) PLANNING: Take drinking water, spare clothes, shoes, and a flashlight. nicoyapeninsula.com





1 PARC NATIONAL DU MONT-TREMBLANT, QUEBEC, CANADA

Gravel roads pass spectacular lakes, streams, rivers, and waterfalls tumbling down mountains. The maple forests in the province of Quebec's largest and oldest national park are among the finest in North America for viewing fall foliage. Prepare your eyes for a riot of yellows, greens, oranges, and reds.

PLANNING: While the forest foliage is prettiest in fall, the park is open year-round, sepag.com

2 DEMPSTER HIGHWAY, CANADA

From Yukon's Dawson City, head north through 457 miles (736 km) of icy wilderness. The track brings you to Inuvik—the largest town in the Arctic Circle. In winter, the SUV-testing odyssey extends another 121 miles (194 km), as a river and the Atlantic freeze to form an ice road to the even remoter Tuktoyaktuk.

PLANNING: Eagle Plains, midway along, has the only gas station and hotel between Dawson and Inuvik. nunavuttourism.com

3 HOLE-IN-THE-ROCK SCENIC BACKWAY, UTAH

This 57-mile (92 km) dirt road abruptly terminates at Hole-in-the-Rock, a 1,200-foot (366 m) crevice blasted and chiseled by 250 Mormon pioneers in 1880. Pass Devil's Garden (a picnic spot surrounded by unusual rock formations), a sandstone amphitheater called Dance Hall Rock, and the Escalante Canyons.

PLANNING: The route starts 5 miles (8 km) east of Escalante on Scenic Byway 12. Allow time for hiking off the main trail. nps.gov

4 4WD TRAINING, ICELAND

Follow in the tracks of elite special forces and aid workers training for service in Afghanistan and other fields of combat as you learn advanced 4WD skills in a country with varied terrains, no motorways, and few surfaced roads.

PLANNING: In addition to offering 4WD military training, Nature Explorer is an outdoor tour company run by wilderness experts. natureexplorer.is

5 WADI DHAIQAH, OMAN

Lying in a canyon about 56 miles (90 km) east from Muscat, Wadi Dhaiqah presents a remarkably mixed terrain of lofty cliffs, 10

UNTAMED ROADS

Celebrate extremes of human—and automotive—endurance with our pick of the most back-to-nature and bone-rattling rough tracks.

narrow valleys, and deep pools fed by natural springs. It's one of Oman's driving and visual—highlights.

PLANNING: It's safest to go in a convoy of experienced drivers or with a tour group or local expert. Dry summer months offer the best driving conditions. omantourism.gov.om

6 SAVANNAH WAY, AUSTRALIA

Stretching 2,300 miles (3,700 km) from Broome in the west to Cairns in the east, this is an epic sweep across northern Australia, much of the route on unsealed roads. Highlights include spectacular gorges and eerie sandstone rock formations. Above all, there is the unforgettable experience of being out in the wilderness, camping by night and driving through huge Outback expanses by day.

PLANNING: The dry season, May through September, is the best time for the Savannah Way.

7 PAMIR HIGHWAY, KYRGYZSTAN/ TAJIKISTAN

Mighty peaks, high passes, golden plateau grasslands, beautiful lakes—you will experience all these and more on the M41 highway through the Pamir range of Central Asia. The world's second highest international highway, this 800-mile (1,300 km) route links Osh in Kyrqyzstan

OPPOSITE: The canyons of Escalante in Utah's Grand Staircase National Monument boast some of the United States' least tamed roads. with Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe. Don't miss the detour between Alichur and Khorog along the stunning Wakhan Valley.

PLANNING: For drier weather, go in May through September. You need a permit to visit the Gorne-Badakhshan Autonomous Region of Tajiki-stan. Get this at Tajik embassies and consulates when you apply for your Tajikistan visa. caravanistan.com/tajikistan/pamir-highway

8 MANALI TO LEH HIGHWAY, INDIA

Connecting Manali in Himachal Pradesh with Leh, capital of the high Ladakh region, the highway twists and turns between five spectacular passes, starting with Rohtang La just north of Manali and finishing with Tanglang La—the highest, at 17,480 feet (5,328 m)—south of Leh. Green mountain-sides around Manali give way to bare rock to the north. In Ladakh, Buddhist monasteries crown hilltops.

PLANNING: The highway is open only between June and November. For Rohtang La, you need a permit, which you can get online or at the SDM (Sub-Divisional Magistrates) office in Manali. tourism-of-india.com/leh

9 ROUTE 9552, FINLAND

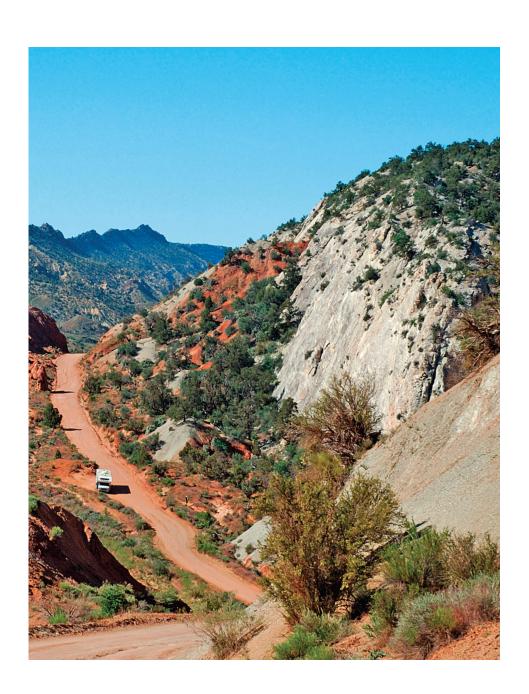
An almost palpable silence and solitude are the attractions of this 47-mile (76 km) unpawed road through forests in Finland's far northern Lapland region, beyond the Arctic Circle. Route 9552 links two larger highways near the resort town of Kittlå in the south and the settlement of Pokka to

PLANNING: Be prepared for emergencies; if you were to break down, there is little passing traffic and no cell phone coverage on many stretches. visitfinland.com/lapland

10 SANI PASS, SOUTH AFRICA/ LESOTHO

The unpaved road through the Sani Pass, 9435 feet (2,876 m) above sea level in the Drakensberg Mountains, zigzags through terrifyingly sharp hairpin bends, sometimes with snow and ice. Coming from South Africa, a reward lies beyond the Lesotho border—Sani Mountain Lodge, Africa's highest pub, with a log fire to toast yourself by.

PLANNING: You may want to hire an experienced driver in Underberg, at the South African end of the road. The South Africans allow only 4WDs through at their border post. drakensberg org/activities/drakensberg-sani-pass



ARGENTINA'S HEART

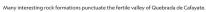
Red-rock canyons, shifting dunes, verdant vineyards, colonial towns, ancient ruins, and cardón cacti are highlights along this varied loop drive through northwestern Argentina. You will need at least three days to take it all in, and ideally much more.

rom Salta, skirt Embalse Cabra Corral reservoir, whose whitewater outlets are popular with kayakers, and head south on RN 68. About 60 miles (96 km) on, the smooth, paved road begins its ascent through the striking canyon country of Quebrada de las Conchas (see Stay a While). You pass through the dune fields of Los Médanos as you approach the town of Cafayate, which has a colonial $\,$ ambience and is surrounded by wine country, making it the ideal place to stay overnight. Before leaving, take a detour 34 miles (54 km) south to the pre-Columbian fortress of Quilmes, one of Argentina's most $important\ archaeological\ sites.\ From\ Cafayate, the\ northbound\ RN\ 40\ is\ paved\ only\ as\ far\ as\ the\ village$ of San Carlos. Then follow the narrow, dusty road as it we aves through dramatically folded sedimentarystrata, occasionally emerging onto alluvial flats whose greenery contrasts with the monochrome hills. Stop at the village of Molinos, 55 miles (88 km) north of San Carlos, and visit Estancia Colomé, 11 miles $(18\,km)\,west-possibly\,the\,world's\,highest\,vineyard.\,To\,reach\,the\,city\,of\,Cachi, 29\,miles\,(46\,km)\,farther$ on, continue north through the pictures que hamlet of Seclantás. The RN 40 is paved for another 7 miles (11 km) east, to the village of Payogasta, where it intercepts paved RP 33, an arrow-straight road that climbs to Parque Nacional Los Cardones, home to the saguaro-like cacti that dot the landscape at alti $tudes \, over \, 11,000 \, feet \, (3,400 \, m). \, The \, pavement \, ends \, about \, 5.5 \, miles \, (8.8 \, km) \, into \, the \, park, \, and \, the \, road \, more \, 200 \, mu \, and \, 200 \, mu$ peaks at 10,985 feet (3,348 m) at the Cuesta del Obispo. It then follows an awesomely steep, zigzag route that drops from high desert into subtropical woodlands on one of the country's most spectacular descents. Turn north onto the RN 68 back to Salta.

I STAY A WHILE I The fabulous landscape of **Quebrada de las Conchas**, also known as Quebrada de Cafayate, recalls Utah's Bryce Canyon with its stunning and colorful rock landforms such as El Sapo (The Toad) and Los Castillos (The Castles). There are no services on the route, so take a picnic and plenty of water in readiness for exploring sites such as the Garganta del Diablo (Devil's Throat) and El Anfiteatro (Amphitheater).



FROM: Loop route from Salta, Argentina ROADS: RN 68, RN 40, RP 33 DISTANCE: 380 miles (611 km) DRIVING TIME: 8 hours WHEN TO GO; Year-round PLANNING: Leave with a full tank of gas. argentina.travel







The red-colored Gibb River Road—still known as the "beef road"—was built so that cattle could be driven to market from distant ranches.

AUSTRALIA

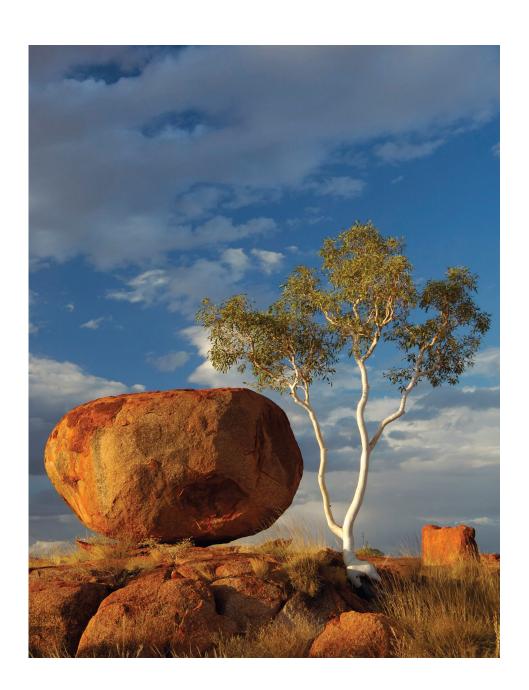
GIBB RIVER ROAD

The long, lonesome Gibb River Road cuts through the heart of the Kimberley region of Western Australia. This rough track is one of the continent's greatest adventure drives, offering a tremendous sense of freedom as you pass through wide-open country.

rom Kununurra, take the Great Northern Highway through pretty scrubland west for 25 miles (40 km) to the marked turnoff toward Wyndham. Head north for a couple of miles, before turning left onto the Gibb River Road. The road's first 150 miles (240 km) are the roughest stretch, with several potentially treacherous river crossings, but the surrounding countryside is magnificent. Fifteen the surrounding country of the surrounding countrmiles (24 km) west from the road's start is the turnoff for El Questro Station, a working cattle station that can arrange fishing trips, horseback riding, and wildlife and rock art drives. Your next refueling stop will be Mount Barnett Roadhouse, 209 miles away (337 km), while there are other places to stay at Imintji Campground, near the turnoff to pretty and popular Bell Creek Gorge, and farther on at the Mount Hart Wilderness Lodge. West of Mount Barnett Roadhouse, you enter the dramatic King Leop old Ranges. For supplies and accommodations, turn off 40 miles (64 km) past Mount Barnett Road $house and head \, 40 \, miles \, (64 \, km) \, north \, to \, Charnley \, River \, Station, or \, continue \, another \, 40 \, miles \, continue \, 40 \, miles \, cont$ $(64\,km)\,along\,the\,road\,before\,turning\,onto\,a\,rough\,bushtrack\,for\,30\,miles\,(48\,km)\,to\,Mount$ Hart Homestead. A turnoff goes 20 miles (32 km) to the spectacular Windjana Gorge National Park and, farther on, to Tunnel Creek National Park, one of the oldest cave systems in Western Australia and home to Aboriginal rock paintings. Over the ages, the Lennard River cut its way through the rock here to form the gorges, and at Tunnel Creek you can wade through the tunnel to see flying foxes. The last 40 miles (64 km) of the Gibb River Road into Derby are paved.

FROM: Kununurra, Australia
TO: Derby, Australia
TO: Derby, Australia
ROADS: Great Northern
Highway, Gibb River Road
DISTANCE: 420 miles (676 km)
DRIVING TIME: 12 hours
WHEN TO GO: April to
September; the road is blocked
at other times.
PLANNING: A 4WD is
recommended; book
places to stay in advance.
australiasnorthwest com





GOURMET ROAD

AUSTRALIA I

ACROSS AUSTRALIA'S OUTBACK

 $Follow\ in\ the\ footsteps\ of\ explorer\ John\ McDouall\ Stuart\ through\ the\ desolate\ saltbush$ country of Australia's deserts, across the Red Centre to Alice Springs and on through the $peaceful\ archipe lago\ of\ outback\ settlements\ in\ the\ north.$



Visitors explore the varied merchandise in a gift shop in Coober Pedy.

eave Port Augusta on the two-lane Stuart Highway, driving north to the scruffy town of Pimba, with Lake Gairdner National Park, a vast saltpan, sprawling off to your left. You're likely to be alone with the big blue sky and your thoughts as you approach the convenient night stop of Coober Pedy (see Highlights), keeping an eye out for scores of kangaroos on the road at dusk. Head north in the morning, passing by Cadney Homestead Roadhouse and the tiny hamlet of Marla (the hottest place in Southern Australia), and through the desert to Alice Springs (see Highlights). On the remaining 950 miles (1,529 km) to Darwin, you'll roll north across the lonely, reddish, stony immensity of the Northern Territory outback, past the hamlet of Ti Tree, Central Mount Stuart Historical Reserve, and Devil's Marbles Conservation Reserve, where you can camp and walk amid the eerily rounded boulders-the eggs of the Rainbow Serpent, according to Aborigine lore.

Keep going through Tennant Creek, once home to a lonely telegraph station (now open to visitors) and the site of a 1930s gold rush, and past the tiny settlement of Renner Springs, where the dry desert $climate\ of\ Australia's\ center\ yields\ to\ the\ tropical\ north.\ Although\ scrubby,\ the\ bush\ becomes\ greener$ and taller from here on. The small town of Daly Waters was once a vital refueling stop for pioneering aviators, and you should visit the Daly Waters Pub (where early Qantas passengers en route to Singapore received their meals) for good food and a chance to admire early aviation memorabilia. Larrimah, a $major\ military\ post\ in\ World\ War\ II,\ was\ once\ the\ terminus\ of\ the\ North\ Australia\ Railway.\ Head\ north,$ passing through Mataranka, which has thermal springs and a pocket of rainforest, and Katherine-a large town famous for nearby Nitmiluk National Park and its beautiful 13-gorge river system, popular with kayakers. The last 200 miles (320 km) crosses rolling bushland. At the old gold-mining town of $Pine\ Creek, a\ paved\ road\ leads\ into\ the\ heart\ of\ the\ Kakadu\ National\ Park.\ Turnoffs\ lead\ to\ Tjuwaliyn$ (Douglas) Hot Springs Nature Park, the beautiful Robin Falls, and the pretty gorges of Daly River Nature Park, which is an ideal camping spot. Housing becomes more frequent and suddenly you are at the end of the line: Darwin's palm-ringed esplanade and the coast at King Sound beckon.

OPPOSITE: The granite boulders known as the Devil's Marbles (Karlu Karlu) are sacred to the Aboriginals.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

The opal-mining town of **Coober Pedy** stands in a weirdly desolate desert landscape. There is plenty to see, including the underground housing, which most residents favor to escape the high daytime temperatures of the region

Alice Springs is an oasis town in the heart of the dramatic MacDonnell Ranges in Australia's Red Centre. It is the hub of many outback attractions, with scenic hiking trails nearby.

If you want to go to Adelaide without driving, load the car onto the Ghan train and ride back from here.

FROM: Port Augusta, Australia To: Darwin, Australia **ROAD:** Stuart Highway DISTANCE: 1,700 miles (2,735 km) DRIVING TIME: 7 days WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Take basic spares and extra water for yourself and the car. If you head into the bush, you'll need a 4WD, and get local advice. exploringaustralia.com.au



1 FRENCH LINE, SIMPSON DESERT, AUSTRALIA

Running east-northeast from Dalhousie Springs to Birdsville, the Z71-mile (437 km) French Line was built through the world's longest parallel dunes, with around 1,200 red sandy crests to negotiate, most notably the 130-foot (40 m) high Big Red (or Nappanerica).

PLANNING: Dalhousie has a campground and Birdsville a hotel—expect little else between. Entry permits are necessary. The desert closes November through February. southaustralia.com

2 ULAANBAATAR-ELSEN TASARKHAN-KARAKORUM, MONGOLIA

Drive through the steppes of the Gobi from Mongolia's capital to Karakorum, Genghis Khan's 13th-century seat, through a curious mix of mountains, forests, and towering sand dunes. On the road, look out for Bactrian camels, Asiatic wild asses, and gazelles.

PLANNING: Allow two days. The Naadam festival of wrestling, archery, and horse racing (July) is a good time to visit Ulaanbaatar. visitmongolia.com

3 TRANS-SIBERIAN HIGHWAY, RUSSIA/KAZAKHSTAN

This paved Eurasian artery runs for more than 0,835 miles (11,000 km) from St. Petersburg on the Baltic Sea to the Sea of Japan, crossing seemingly endless Siberian taiga. The most challenging stretch is the partly unsurfaced 1,345-mile (2,165 km) long MSB, or Amur Highway, between Chita and Khabarovsk.

PLANNING: It's safest to spend the night at truck stops near police stations. Expect much camping—hotels are few and far between. Allow plenty of time for Kazakh and multiple-entry Russian visa prollications. (araphtet

4 ADDIS ABABA-JINKA, ETHIOPIA

This challenging 474-mile (762 km) road through the Omo Valley crosses some of Ethiopia's most isolated ethnographic areas. Tribes include the Mursis, known for terracotta dishes embedded in the women's lower lips; the Dorze; and the Gurage, who live in thatched-roof villages.

PLANNING: The road leads southwest from Addis Ababa to the town of Jinka, near the Kenyan border, via Debre Zeyit, Hawassa, and Arba Minch. tourismethiopia.org 10

WILDERNESS DRIVES

Military-style planning is essential for this pick of the world's most challenging, but rewarding, 4WD wilderness odysseys.

5 SKELETON COAST ROAD, NAMIBIA

This gravel road passes through desolate wilderness with plenty of scenic drama. While they initially appear barren, the variously colored sand dunes support a variety of life, including gemsbok, jackals, zebra, springboks, and even lions, while whales may be spotted offshore.

PLANNING: The coastal road (C34) starts at the town of Swakopmund and follows the coast up to the Uqab River. skeletoncoastsafaris.com

6 WHIPSAW TRAIL, BRITISH COLUMBIA

This 64-mile (103 km) loop through forest and mountainside in the eastern Cascade range is for experienced off-roaders only. Challenges include mud pits, unbridged river crossings, deep ruts, and scrambles over bare rock. Rewards include alpine meadows ablaze in season with wildflowers. Join the trail from the Tulameen River valley west of Princeton.

PLANNING: There are two campsites and various cabins along the way, where you can overnight. The best months are June through September. alltrails.com/trail/canada/british-columbia/whipsaw-trail

7 MOJAVE ROAD, CALIFORNIA

Starting on the Colorado River, the unpaved Mojave Road takes you eastwest for 140 miles (225 km) across Mojave

OPPOSITE: Members of the pastoral Suri community near their thatched-roof village in rural Ethiopia National Preserve to Afton Canyon. After the oasis of Piute Spring, marvel as you enter the United States' largest forest of Joshua trees. For seasoned off-roaders the most thrilling stretch is crossing the pancake-flat Soda Dry Jake

PLANNING: Dennis Casebier's Mojave Road Guide gives mile-by-mile instructions. Spring and fall are the best times; winters can be very cold and summers almost unbearably hot. nps.gov/ moja/blamourvisit/mojave-road.htm

8 CARRETERA AUSTRAL, CHILE

Head south through northern Patagonia, relishing some of Chile's most scenic and sparsely populated regions. Much of it still unpaved, the 770-mile (1,240 km) Carretera Austral links Puerto Montt in the north and Villa O'Higgins in the south. Fjords, temperate rainforests, glaciers, and waterfalls are some of the delights. Relax in hot springs at Puyuhuapi. In Villa O'Higgins, enjoy a whisky chilled with glacier ice.

PLANNING: Allow at least a week, preferably longer, to enjoy the route. The best months are November through April. chile.travel/en/where -to-go/patagonia-and-antartica/carretera-austral

9 GUWAHATI TO TAWANG, INDIA

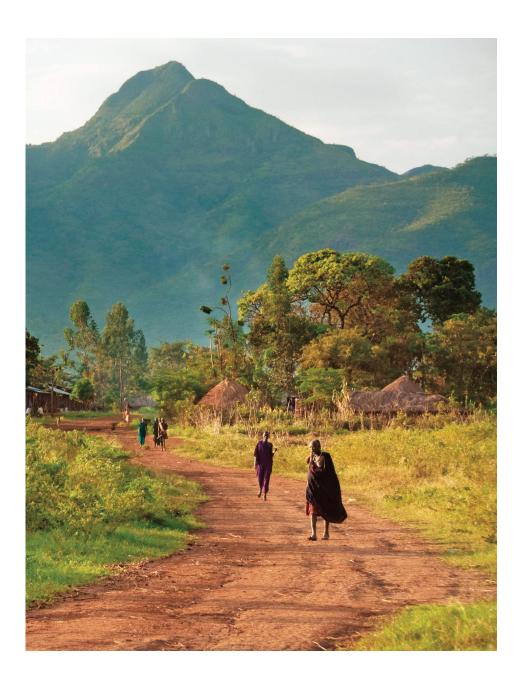
The beautiful 320-mile (515 km) route leads from the Brahmaputra Valley high into the eastern Himalaya near the border with Tibet and Bhutan. Hairpin bends beyond Bhalukpong lead up to Bomdila and Dirang, a charming hill station. Se La, at 13,829 feet (4,214 m), is one of the Himalayás highest motorable passes.

PLANNING: Foreign tourists need a Protected Area Permit to enter Arunachal Pradesh state. Check the Arunachal Tourism website for the ways of getting this. arunachaltourism.com

10 SWARTBERG PASS, WESTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

The 5,194-foot (1,583 m) pass through the Swartberg range links the two semi-arid regions of the Great and Little Karoo. Stop at Teeberg viewpoint, where you may see klipspringer antelope darting from rock to rock, and overhead a soaring eagle. Continue negotiating the dizzying hairpin bends that take you to Die Top, or

PLANNING: The road is unpaved, but passable in non-4WD vehicles with good ground clearance. sa-venues.com/attractionswc/swartberg-pass.php



ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

UZBEKISTAN I

THE SILK ROAD

For more than 2,000 years, trade routes ran across Asia, connecting China to the Mediterranean. Precious goods were transported by caravans of camels, horses, and mules, and with them came new religions and fresh ideas.



Turquoise domes top the minarets of Bukhara's early 19th-century Chor Minor (Four Minarets) Madrassa.

he length of the storied Silk Road falls between China and the Mediterranean. The Silk Road was never actually just one road but several, each of which followed a different path across a forbidding terrain of high mountains and deserts, where travelers had to take refuge from ferocious weather and bandits in a series of trading centers. Some of these became powerful and wealthy, and turned into centers of art, craftsmanship, learning, and faith. This was nowhere more true than in Uzbekistan, where three fabled cities-Samarqand, Bukhara, and Khiwa-flourished in the golden age of Islamic architecture. The route also evokes the memory of the great conqueror Timur (1336-1405), better known as Tamerlane—heir to the marauding Mongols, ancestor of the powerful Mughals of India.

Begin in Tashkent, Uzbekistan's capital—a brash, modern city rebuilt since a 1966 earthquake, but still containing an atmospheric old town and interesting monuments and museums. These include the khazret Imam complex of mosques and madrassas (religious schools), which date from the 16th century, the History Museum of the People of Uzbekistan; and the Museum of Applied Arts, introducing the region's crafts and architecture.

The M-39 heads southwest for 180 miles (290 km) to Samarqand, passing through

I HISTORY OF THE SILK ROAD

For more than 3,000 years, traders, soldiers, pilgrims, and missionaries crossed the heart of Asia on the silk trails, transporting luxury goods and new ideas from east to west. The route, extending 4,000 miles (6,645 km) from Chia to the Mediterranean, was integral in developing the great civilizations of China, India, Persia, and Rome, and takes its name from the much-coveted Chineses silks that stimulated trade between the far-flung nations. The road's most famous traveler was Marco Polo, a Venetian whose epic 24-year journey inspired his fellow Europeans to explore the world, including Christopher Columbus, who owned a copy of The Travels of Marco Polo.

BUKHARA IS A MAZE
OF DUSKY MOSQUES,
TEAHOUSES, AND
BAZAARS; ITS
MESMERIZING
SAND TONES AND
AMORPHOUS SHAPES
LEND AN ORGANIC
FEEL, AS IF THE CITY
ROSE FROM THE
DESERT OF ITS OWN
ACCORD.

-SHERMAKAYE BASS
National Geographic writer

farmland. The stately dignity of Samarqand is reflected in its famous central square, the Registan (see Highlight), described in 1889 by British statesman Lord Curzon as "the noblest public square in the world." Samarqand contains Tamerlane's burial place at the Guri Emir mausoleum, adorned by a ribbed, blue-tiled dome and tiled minaret. Among the other attractions are the huge Bibi Khanum mosque; the Shakhi-Zinda complex of mausoleums, noted for glittering tile decorations; the Afrosiab, site of a ruined pre-Islamic city, with a museum; and the remains of the extraordinary Observatory of Ulugbek.

From Samarqand, the M-37 heads west for 175 miles (282 km) through wooded hills and pasture to Bukhara, nicknamed "The Divine" because of its many 15th- and 16th-century mosques and madrassas. The 1514 Kalon mosque is the most impressive of these for scale alone: It has a 157-foot (48 m) high minaret. Lyabi-kauz Square, at the heart of the old center, has two 16th-century madrassas.

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and a mosque. The old citadel, where the emirs lived, now contains a museum

The A-380 follows the course of the Amu Darya (Oxus River), taking you northwest to the regional center, Urganch, and then to Khiwa. Only toward the end of this 390-mile (628 km) stretch from Bukhara to Khiwa does the landscape soften from hilly desert and scrub to farmland, with shady trees and mudbrick farms. Most buildings in Khiwa date from the 19th century, although many stand on the sites of more ancient structures. The city's impressive brick walls were built in the 17th century on foundations laid some 700

years earlier. The rectangular Ichon-Qala (old town) contains the Kuhna Ark (fortress), where architectural beauty provided an incongruous setting for the tyrannical rule of the khans of Khiwa. The mosques, minarets, and madrassas in the Ichon-Qala include the Juma mosque, which was first mentioned by a 10th-century traveler. It has ranks of 212 carved wooden pillars, some of which date back to the 12th century. Outside the old town, the Tash Chauli (see Highlights) is the large and intriguing 19th-century palace of the khans; the beautiful harem, throne room, and courtyards are evidence of their immense power.

FROM: Tashkent, Uzbekistan To: Khiwa, Uzbekistan ROADS: M-39, M-37, A-380 **DISTANCE:** 745 miles (1,200 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 days
WHEN TO GO: Mid-March to the end of May, or September to early November May, or September to early November PLANNING: Uzbekistan's main international airport is at Tashkent; Urgench, near Khiwa, has an airport for flights back to Tashkent. The road network is fairly good. visit-uzbekistan.com



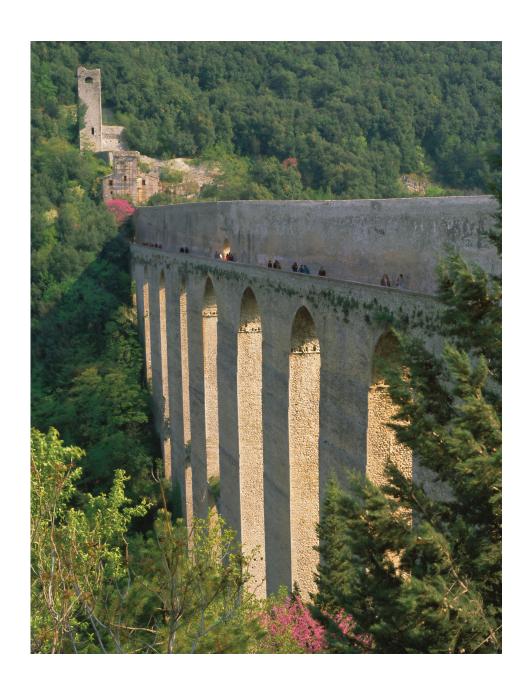
Uzbek sheep herders tend their flock in Navoiy.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Samarqand's **Registan** is surrounded on three sides by the towering, tile-decorated arches, domes, and minarets of madrassas dating from the 15th to the 17th century.

Khiwa's Tash Chauli palace of the khans contains exquisite harem quarters, famed for being some of Central Asia's finest secular architecture.

Also at Khiwa, the 18th-century **Pahlavan Mahmud Mausoleum**, dedicated to a revered ancient wrestler, doctor, and poet, has a tiled interior of extraordinary opulence.



GOURMET ROAD

I ITALY I

UMBRIA'S RURAL HEARTLANDS

The lesser-known hill towns between the cities of Assisi and Spoleto in central Italy are the highlights of this bucolic drive off Umbria's beaten path. Attractions include wonderful medieval buildings, while the views from Monte Subasio are not to be missed.



Glorious 15th-century frescoes by Pinturicchio adorn the walls of Santa Maria Maggiore in Spello

ead east from Assisi to the Eremo delle Carceri (see Highlights) monastery. Follow the Subasio road as it climbs through the woods to the open slopes of Monte Subasio. The road is mostly gravel, but generally sound, and reaches 4,232 feet (1,290 m) with unforgettable views. Park by the road and stroll the mountain's grassy meadows, then descend to Spello (see Stay a While), where you should park and explore the medieval center on foot. Most sites, such as the Roman gateway, are ranged along the town's main street. From here, take the SS75 toward Foligno, leaving it at the first major junction and following signs to Bevagna on the SS316. The town is a rural backwater with a stunning medieval square, where two beautiful 12th-century churches face each other. Also visit the remains of a Roman temple and amphitheater, as well as the local history museum. A scenic road leads from $Be vagna\ to\ the\ hill top\ wine\ town\ of\ Montefalco\ (see\ Highlights),\ which\ offers\ vast\ views\ of\ the\ Vale\ of\ Montefalco\ (see\ Highlights),\ which\ offers\ vast\ views\ of\ the\ Vale\ of\ Montefalco\ (see\ Highlights),\ which\ offers\ vast\ views\ of\ the\ Vale\ of\ Montefalco\ (see\ Highlights),\ which\ whi$ Spoleto. To leave the town, head south and turn left at the intersection just beyond San Fortunato and follow signs up to the village of Trevi, which soon appears before you on a spectacular pyramidal hill. The highlights here include the sleek Pinacoteca Comunale, featuring magnificent Umbrian paintings,and an olive oil museum. Return to the valley and turn south on the SS3 toward Spoleto. South of Trevi, stop off at the Tempio del Clitunno, an eighth-century church, and the limpid pools and springs of Fonti del Clitunno, renowned since classical times. From the Fonti, continue south 7 miles (11 km) to $Spoleto, one of central\ Italy's\ most\ charming\ towns, replete\ with\ Romanesque\ churches.$

STAY A WHILE I There are some wonderful sites in Spello. Don't miss Santa Maria Maggiore and the famous fresco cycle showing the Life of the Virgin by Pinturicchio, one of Umbria's leading Renaissance artists. For more superb art, visit the Pinacoteae Civica, which showcases the town's religious and artistic history. Walk up to the Arco Romano for its excellent views of the old Roman amphitheater, which is unfortunately closed to the public, and visit Villa Fidelia for its furniture, costumes, and sculpture. If you have time, climb to the top of the town for some memorable views.

OPPOSITE: Enjoy dramatic views from the medieval bridge and aqueduct of Ponte delle Torri in Spoleto.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

The medieval Franciscan monastery of Eremo delle Carceri, just south of Assisi, was the first home of St. Francis and his followers. You can see the small cawe where Italy's patron saint prayed; the surrounding woods have plenty of tranquil trails to explore.

Montefalco has splendid frescoes visit the superb gallery in the former church of San Francesco, which has a marvelous cycle by Benozzo Goszoli. Also worth seeing are the churches of Sant'Agostino (Via Umberto 1), Sant'lluminat (Via Verdi), and San Fortunato (just south of town).

FROM: Assisi, Italy
TO: Spoleto, Italy
ROADS: Local roads, SS75,
SS316, SS3
DISTANCE: 53 miles (86 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: umbriatourism.it



THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED | 167

THE CALM OF CERNA VALLEY

 $Wind your way through the {\it impressive mountains} \ and \ breathtaking \ scenery \ of \ western$ $Romania\ for\ an\ adventurous\ rural\ excursion\ with\ a\ strong\ artistic\ flavor\ and\ some$ picturesque country towns.

ârgu Jiu's most famous son is legendary artist Constantin Brâncuși, whose emphasis on revealing the essence of his subjects led him to become the father

of modern sculpture. The town is closely associated with the artist, and the World War I memorials here are some of his most poignant works. Head west on the DN67D through gentle farmland to the village of Pestisani. Turn left on a local road to Hobița and visit Brâncuși's well-preserved childhood home—Timber House, now a small $museum.\ Return\ to\ Peştişani\ and\ continue\ west,\ with\ the\ grand\ Cerna\ Mountains\ rising\ to\ the\ northead and\ continue\ west,\ with\ the\ grand\ Cerna\ Mountains\ rising\ to\ the\ northead\ continue\ west,\ with\ the\ grand\ Cerna\ Mountains\ rising\ to\ the\ northead\ continue\ west,\ with\ the\ grand\ Cerna\ Mountains\ rising\ to\ the\ northead\ continue\ west,\ with\ the\ grand\ Cerna\ Mountains\ rising\ to\ the\ northead\ continue\ west,\ with\ the\ grand\ Cerna\ Mountains\ rising\ to\ the\ northead\ continue\ west,\ with\ the\ grand\ Cerna\ Mountains\ rising\ to\ the\ northead\ continue\ west,\ with\ the\ grand\ Cerna\ Mountains\ rising\ to\ the\ northead\ continue\ west,\ which is the second continue\ which is the s$ west, then turn right onto a road signposted for Tismana. Drive through the hillside town until you reach the 14th-century monastery of Mănăstirea Tismana and enjoy the stunning mountain scenery. Return to the main road and head west through the pretty wooded tablelands of Plaiul Cloşani to Baia $\ de \ Aram \ a, one of the most charming country towns in Romania. \ Back on the \ DN67D, continue \ west,$ passing through the villages of Brebina, Titerleşti, and Mărășești. The highway then climbs steeply to a 3,450-foot (1,050 m) pass, making a series of tight, serpentine loops through bucolic countryside $strewn\ with\ houses, or chards, hay fields, and\ more\ small\ villages, with\ tall\ ridges\ rising\ to\ the\ northwest.$ At the pass, leave your car and take a trail west through beech woods and meadows to the Mehedinți Plateau, which is ringed with spectacular karstic outcroppings dotted with isolated black pines. Return to the road and head on to the Valea Cernei (Cerna Valley) beyond the pass, where brown bear and lynx $live \ relatively \ undisturbed. \ Drive \ south \ along \ the \ Cerna \ River to \ the \ Roman \ spatown \ of \ B\"{a}ile \ Herculane.$



PLANNING: Be prepared for rough, potholed road surfaces in places. romaniatourism.com

I EXCURSION I From Baia de Aramà, to get to Ponoarele and the forest reserve of Ponoare Lilac, turn left onto a country road that makes a sharp, right-hand bend. A little farther on is a massive natural stone bridge known as God's Bridge−so-called because several cars have slipped off the road here, but no one has yet died. South, between the bridge and Lake Zaton, is an impressive field of calcareous rocks.







 ${\sf Dusk}\ is\ a\ wonderful\ time\ to\ explore\ Anghiari's\ medieval\ hill top\ streets.$

I ITALY I

HIDDEN TUSCANY

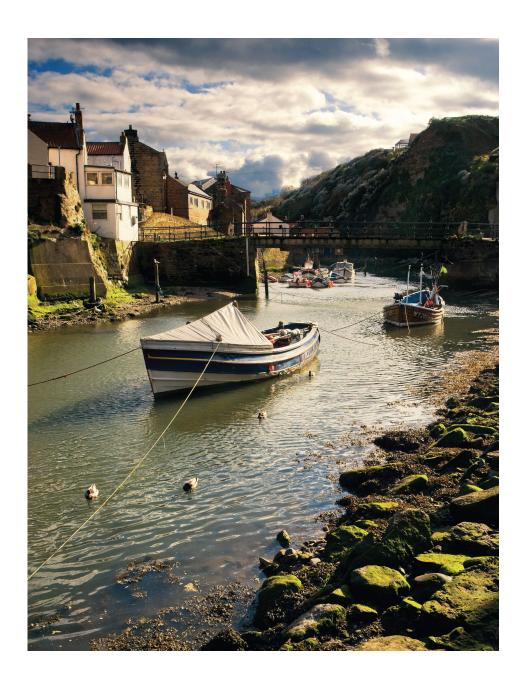
 $Although southern \ Tuscany \ attracts \ a \ multitude \ of visitors, too few \ spend \ time \ in \ the outstanding \ countryside \ around \ Arezzo. \ With its \ wild \ hills, \ high \ mountains, \ remote \ abbeys, \ and \ ancient forests, this \ region \ is \ a \ delight \ to \ explore.$

rom Arezzo's delightful medieval heart, take the SR71 north to Ponte alla Chiassa and turn right, following signs to Chiassa Superiore and Anghiari. Just before Anghiari, take a minor road to the ninth-century Romanesque church of Pieve di Santa Maria alla Sovara. Return to Anghiari to explore its medieval center and the art at the Museo di Palazzo Taglieschi, before taking the only road north to the pretty, hilltop village of Caprese Michelangelo. The famous artist was born here, and his former home is now a modest museum. From here, take the mountain road northwest through Chiusi $della\,Verna\,to\,the\,junction\,with\,the\,SP208.\,Follow\,signs\,to\,La\,Verna, one\,of\,Italy's\,most\,important\,Franchischer Communication and the SP208.\,Follow\,signs\,to\,La\,Verna, one\,Order Communica$ ciscan sanctuaries, where St. Francis of Assisi is said to have received the stigmata. There is a hiking trail to the top of Monte Penna offering fantastic views of the Arno Valley. Return to the SP208 and turn right for Bibbiena, 16 miles (26 km) west. Here, pick up the SR71, then the SR70, and head north to Poppi and the medieval fortress of Palazzo dei Conti Guidi and the 12th-century church of San Fedele. Leave Poppi the way you came, and turn left toward Camaldoli and another monastery (the Eremo) in the heart of the Camaldoli and another monastery (the Eremo) in the heart of the Camaldoli and another monastery (the Eremo) in the heart of the Camaldoli and another monastery (the Eremo) in the heart of the Camaldoli and the Camaldol the Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi. The park has some of the region's most scenic mountains and forests, with many walks starting at Camaldoli. From near the monastery, take the only road west to Pratovecchio, and follow the minor road, signed to Firenze, a short distance to see San Pietro di Romena, a beautiful eighth-century church in an idyllic setting. A road from here leads to the magnificent views of the Castello di Romena. Return to Pratovecchio and drive the 28 miles (46 km) to Arezzo.

FROM: Loop route from Arezzo, Italy ROADS: SR71, minor roads, SP208, SR70

DISTANCE: 130 miles (208 km)
DRIVING TIME: 4.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Bring boots for hiking.
discovertuscany.com





| ENGLAND |

MOORS AND MORE

This drive through the North York Moors National Park, in northern England, features stark but beautiful moorland, lonely green hills, and spectacular coastal cliffs, with gentle rolling pastures and plenty of pretty villages perfect for stopping off for a cup of tea.



 $The \ ancient \ Gothic \ arches \ of \ Rievaulx \ Abbey \ rise \ majestically \ from \ a \ terrace \ on \ the \ side \ of \ a \ tranquil \ valley.$

tart at Pickering, a compact market town whose parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul contains interesting 15th-century frescoes. From here, you can enjoy a ride on the renovated steam trains of the fabulous North Yorkshire Moors Railways, through beautiful moor countryside. Take the A170 east from Pickering to Thornton Dale, then turn left onto a side road to reach the Dalby Forest Drive, which winds for 9 scenic miles (14.5 km) through the moors and emerges at Hackness. Continue east to Scarborough, Yorkshire's premier seaside resort, sitting on a rocky promontory and with plenty of cafés, amusement arcades, theaters, and other attractions. The ruins of an 11th-century castle divides the town into the quiet North Bay and the more touristy South Bay.

The A165 leads north to Cloughton, where the coast road switchbacks to Staintondale and Ravenscar. From Ravenscar, you can enjoy a pretty walk on the abandoned railroad track or along the cliff-top path. Take the A171 north, and turn right down the steep B1447 to Robin Hood's Bay, a fishing village that was once a smuggling den and is now full of characterful pubs and cafés. The B1447 continues to Whitby (see Highlights), the setting for much of Bram Stoker's Dracula. From here, take the A174 north to the cliff village of Staithes, where the young Captain James Cook served as a grocer's assistant. Continue on the A174 to Easington, then turn onto the A171. A short drive later, turn left on minor roads through the idyllic villages of Danby, Castleton, and Westerdale. Farther south, pass Ralph Cross, where medieval travelers left coins "for those less fortunate"; bear left past White Cross (also known as Fat Betty) to the quaint village of Rosedale Abbey. From here, take side roads to Hutton-le-Hole, which has some restored local buildings at the Ryedale Folk Museum. Two miles (3 km) east is Lastingham, where the crypt of St. Mary's Church is believed to shelter the burial place of the seventh-century St. Cedd. From Hutton-le-Hole, take the A170 and turn right for the market town of Helmsley and nearby Duncombe Park (see Highlights) and the spectacular abbeys of Byland and Rievaulx (see Highlights). Return to Pickering via the A170.

 $\textbf{OPPOSITE:} \ Fishing \ boats \ lie \ moored \ in \ Rox by \ (or \ Staithes) \ Beck, \ which \ reaches \ the \ North \ Sea \ at \ Staithes$

| HIGHLIGHTS |

The seaside town of **Whitby** is charm encapsulated, with fantastic 13th-century abbey ruins on the cliff, the Norman church of St. Mary, and the Captain Cook Memorial Museum.

Finely restored **Duncombe Park**, the North Moors' preeminent stately home, boasts lavish interiors (open April-October) and lovely gardens.

Owing to the difficult natural terrain, Rievaulx Abbey—a Cistercian foundation built in 1123—was designed to face north-south rather than the traditional east-west.

FROM: Loop drive from Pickering, England ROADS: A170, Dalby Forest Drive, A165, A171, B1447, A174, minor roads

DISTANCE: 120 miles (193 km)
DRIVING TIME: 5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: Making a few
overnight stops will help you
get the most out of this national
park, moors.uk.net



THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED | 171



The beautiful rock colors of the Gorges du Tarn stand out against the verdant background of a tree-filled valley.

| FRANCE |

GORGES DU TARN

The Tarn and Jonte Rivers have cut through a limestone plateau in southern France, creating spectacular canyons and gorges, at times hundreds of feet deep. Considered one of France's most scenic spots, the area is also home to some wonderful medieval villages.

he old tanning town of Millau makes a good touring base for the plunging Gorges du Tarn, whose colored cliffs change subtly with the light. From Millau, follow the Tarn River north and east, on the D809 and D907. Near Les Vignes, about halfway along the canyon, zigzag up the $\,$ D995 and then take the D46 to the aptly named Point Sublime, with a terrific view of the gorge and river below. The gorge narrows dramatically at the spectacular channel of Les Détroits, before reaching La Malène, a pretty little village that is the main crossing point of the canyon, and is a good place to take the beautiful village of Ste.-Enimie, with its many old limestone buildings, and then continue to the town of Florac—south and east along the D907 and N106—with a 17th-century castle at its center. From here, head south along the D907 into the verdant mountains and wide-open spaces of Parc National $\ \, \text{des C\'evennes, one of the most picture sque parks in France. Follow the D9, D260, and D983 along the}$ stunning Corniche des Cévennes for 31 miles (50 km) to St.-Jean-du-Gard. Originally cut in the early 18th century, the Corniche des Cévennes offers superb views of green valleys and hills: perfect hiking and cycling country. St.-Jean-du-Gard has a good museum of local life, the Musée des Vallées Cévenoles $(95\,Grand\,Rue).\,Take\,the\,D907/996\,and\,head\,west\,to\,Meyrue is.\,The\,Abîme\,de\,Bramabiau, southeast\,of$ Meyrueis, off the D986, is an abyss with an underground river. Northwest of the town lie the splendid Gorges de la Jonte and two famous caves-Aven Armand, a vast grotto full of colored stalactites, and the Grotte de Dargilan. Continue on the D996, D907, and N9-E11 to return to Millau, where the stunning Millau Viaduct, the world's highest bridge, designed by British architect Norman Foster and French engineer Michel Virlogeux, spans the valley of the River Tarn.

FROM: Loop route from Millau, France
ROADS: D809, D907, D995, D46, D907, N106, D9, D260, D983, D986, D996, N9-E11
DISTANCE: 60 miles (90 km)
BITAING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO 60: Go out of season (avoid summer) to miss the crowds.

PLANNING: about-france.com



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TANZANIA I

SERENGETI SAFARI

The incredible Serengeti in northern Tanzania covers 11.583 square miles (30,000 km²), and has the world's largest overland migration, when two million animals travel south to follow the rains.

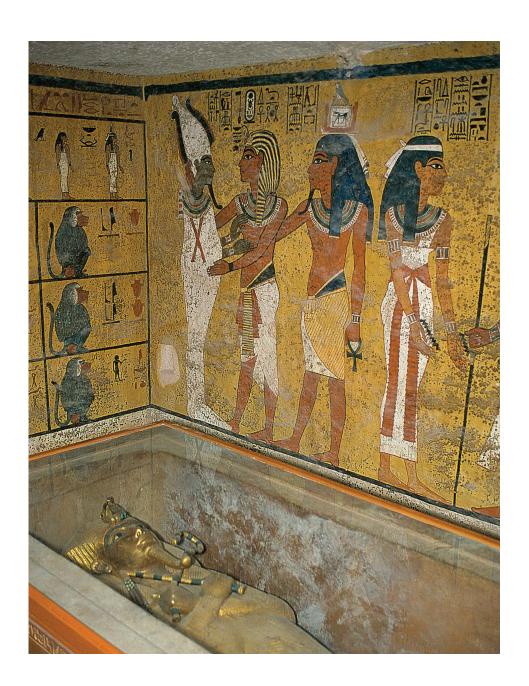
etch your 4WD in Arusha and head west along Tanzania national route A104, $flanked\,by\,maize\,fields\,and\,open\,grasslands\,where\,Maasai\,herders\,graze\,their\,cattle.$ Reaching the town of Makuyuni, turn right onto the B144 (toward Oldeani). The entrance to Lake Manyara National Park, worth a detour for its flamingo population, is just ahead on the left. From Manyara, the B144 snakes up the Great Rift escarpment into the high plateau $country. \ The \ route \ runs \ through \ a \ forest \ of \ baobab \ trees—their \ trunks \ as \ thick \ as \ a \ locomotive—and$ farmland. At Oldeani, the highway jags northward and begins a slow ascent up the lush southern slope of Ngorongoro Crater (about 38 miles/60 km from Manyara). Your first view of the massive crater interior comes at 7,500-foot (2,286 m) Heroes Point. Lodges and restaurants are scattered along the crater's southern rim. From here, the highway plunges down toward the Serengeti. The contrast with the crater's southern slopes could not be more dramatic—rather than thick green bush the countryside morphs into the country of the countrybrown semi-desert. About 40 minutes along, the roadway tumbles into Olduvai Gorge, where in 1931, $British\ anthropologists\ Louis\ and\ Mary\ Leakey\ discovered\ a\ series\ of\ human\ remains\ dating\ back\ more$ than two million years. An archaeological museum on the site celebrates their achievement. An hour west of Olduvai comes Naabi Gate, the eastern entrance to the Serengeti National Park (see Wildlife Encounter). All around are the short grass plains, where massive herds of zebra and wildebeest $roam\ from\ December\ to\ May.\ Otherwise,\ it's\ another\ hour\ to\ Seronera\ in\ the\ heart\ of\ the\ park,\ home\ to$ numerous lodges and campgrounds, and some of the best game viewing. \\

■ WILDLIFE ENCOUNTER ■ After checking into Serengeti National Park at Naabi Gate, veer south across the golden plains, heading for an isolated rock outcrop called the Mort Kopies. Here, you have the chance to see vast herds of wildebeest and zebra in columns that stretch a mile (1.6 km) or more. At night, you may hear the far-off wall of a sported hyena, the hiss of a leopard, and the persistent growls of a lion pride—deep, sonorous grunts that send chills down your spine. FROM: Arusha, Tanzania TO: Seronera, Tanzania ROADS: Tanzania A104, B144 DISTANCE: 187 miles (302 km) DRIVING TIME: 4.5 hours WHEN TO GO: January through February and June through October PLANNING: Book places to stay well in advance. tanzaniatourism.go.tz/en









I EGYPT TO SOUTH AFRICA

CAIRO TO CAPE TOWN

 $This \ drive \ down \ the \ length \ of \ the \ continent \ reveals \ the \ extremes \ of \ Africa, from \ the \ fabled$ $splendors\ of\ Egypt,\ to\ grasslands\ and\ mountain\ landscapes,\ rivers\ and\ lakes,\ through$ $busy\ towns\ and\ empty\ deserts,\ eventually\ arriving\ in\ rambling,\ multicultural\ Cape\ Town.$



Maasai tribesmen drive donkeys across parched grassland in Tanzania.

his epic journey traverses nine countries—Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa-with a flight in the middle. And where else to start it than the pyramids of Giza outside Cairo? Feast your spirit on their ancient majesty before hitting the road south to Luxor, stopping off to sleep under the stars in the White Desert on the way. Near Luxor, another world-famous sight is the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamun, the Valley of the tomb of the boy pharaoh of the boy pharaohKings (see Highlights). Follow the great artery of the Nile south to Aswan, where you can take a cruise around Lake Nasser. Fly from Aswân to the ancient city of Lalibela in Ethiopia, which is famed for its rock-cut churches, which date from the 12th and 13th centuries and are now sites of pilgrimage for $Coptic \ Christians. \ Drive \ south \ to \ the \ capital, \ Addis \ Ababa, \ and \ drink \ steaming \ coffee \ and \ admire \ the$ exquisite local jewelry. Making your way ever southward, cross into Kenya, traversing lands occupied by nomadic Samburu tribespeople and eventually reaching paved roads, with Mount Kenya looming

 $From the Kenyan \ capital, \ Nairobi, head \ on to \ Tanzania, passing \ Maasai \ men \ herding \ livestock \ and$ Maasai women selling crafts at the border town of Namanga. Arusha in northern Tanzania is the starting point for trips to Serengeti National Park and Mount Kilimanjaro. Continue to the capital, Dar Es Salam, and take a ferry to the fabled "spice island" of Zanzibar (see Highlights). Back on the mainland, $drive \ to \ Iringa \ for \ Ruaha \ National \ Park, then \ continue \ across \ the \ Malawi \ border. \ Pause \ a \ while \ on \ the$ shores of Lake Malawi at the campground and lodge at Chitimba, from where you can try your hand at freshwater scuba diving at Nkata Bay. Across the border in Zambia, pass through the capital, Lusaka, on your way to Victoria Falls (see Highlights). Next up is Botswana: Head to Chobe National Park, then $Maun, the\ gateway\ to\ the\ Okavango\ Delta\ (see\ Highlights).\ In\ Namibia,\ visit\ Etosha\ National\ Park\ and$ the town of Swakopmund, where you feel the unmistakable influence of its German colonists. In the south, admire the vast Fish River Canyon, then, as you near the end of your journey, cross into South Africa. The road south takes you through farmland and vineyards to Cape Town.

OPPOSITE: Light glints off a gold sarcophagus in the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings.

HIGHLIGHTS |

No trip to Egypt would be complete without a visit to the **Valley of the Kings** at Luxor, the burial place for the pharaohs of the New Kingdom.

The island of Zanzibar off the coast of Tanzania has plenty to offer, including tropical beaches on the Indian Ocean, spice tours, and Arab architecture.

Sending mist high into the air, the School-foot (1,700 m) wide Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River form a natural border between Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Watch out for hippos, elephants, and buffalo while you take a serene ride in nokoro (dug-out canoe) through the Okavango Delta in Botswana

FROM: Cairo, Egypt
TO: Cape Town, South Africa DISTANCE: 6,565 miles (10,504 km)

DRIVING TIME: 10 weeks WHEN TO GO: October through

February
PLANNING: Use a 4WD as sections of the drive are offroad. Check with your embassy in advance for areas en route that may be dangerous. africaexpeditionsupport.com





A lioness chastises her cub in Chobe National Park's Savuti area.

| BOTSWANA |

DISCOVER OKAVANGO DELTA

Northern Botswana's Okavango Delta is one of Africa's most beautiful oases. Since the Kalahari Desert is irrigated by the waters of the Okavango River, all manner of wildlife flock there to enjoy the lush greenery of one of the world's largest inland deltas.

ount them one by one, the elephants that surround your Land Rover on the delta's grassy floodplain. They act as if you're not even there, as they graze, trumpet, or toss dirt on their backs. This moment will make all the miles you have logged worthwhile, since embarking on a road trip that skirts the Okavango's eastern edge and ventures into the heart of Chobe National Park. The journey starts by following the airport road north out of the town of Maun. When you reach a large roundabout, veer left onto a tarmac road for Shorobe, 29 miles (47 km) away. Not far beyond is a turnoff on the left for Okavango River Lodge and Crocodile Camp, a base for boat trips through the Okavango $we tlands. \ Beyond \ Shorobe, the \ road \ deteriorates, first \ into \ gravel, then \ into \ sand \ and \ hard-baked \ dirt$ that becomes muddy after a shower. Just after the Veterinary Control Fence, you reach a fork marked by a green concrete pillar. Head left toward Moremi Game Reserve, which includes a large part of the delta's eastern side. Cruise the 12 miles (19 km) to the reserve's South Gate. One option here is to head west to Moremi's Third Bridge and Xakanaxa areas, where you are likely to see lions and wild dogs. Otherwise, make a sharp right after the South Gate and drive the arrow-straight road to the lush North Gate/Khwai River area, where the overnight possibilities include campgrounds and lodges. There is $enough game \, around \, here \, for \, several \, days' viewing. \, Continue \, your journey, \, and \, exit \, the \, village \, of \, Khwai \, in the following and \, continue \, continue$ along the north side of the river valley. Beyond an aerodrome comes a junction, where you can fork right onto a road that leads up and over the Magwikhwe Sand Ridge to Mababe Gate, the south entrance to the vast Chobe National Park, famous for its 120,000-strong population of elephants. After you have signed in and paid your park fees, continue due north along the main road another 35 miles (57 km) to Savuti, with a collection of half a dozen campgrounds and lodges.

FROM: Maun, Botswana
TO: Savuti, Botswana
ROADS: Local roads
DISTANCE: 137 miles (220 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1 day
WHEN TO GO: May through
October
PLANNING: Stock up on gas and
water before you leave.
www.ckavango-delta.net



176 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

ALSO RECOMMENDED

• BADLANDS LOOP, SOUTH DAKOTA

The views along the Badlands Loop Road (S. Dak. 240 between Pennington and Jackson) take in desolate prairies and harsh geology, with sharply eroded buttes, pinnacles, and spires. Leave the road for a 10-mile (16 km) loop to Roberts Prairie Dog Town to see some wild prairie dogs. badlands.national-park.com

GRAND CANYON VIEW SCENIC DRIVE, ARIZONA

A 25-mile (40 km) stretch of Ariz. 64 runs along the south rim of the Grand Canyon, connecting Grand Canyon Village with the easternmost viewpoints at Desert View. Stop for a steep hike up Grandview Trail, which lives up to its name, or just enjoy the vertigo-inspiring viewpoints dotted along the road.

nps.gov/grca

MOAPA VALLEY DRIVE, NEVADA

Nev. 169 leads directly into Valley of Fire State Park, where the sandstone has oxidized into fiery reds and oranges. The flame-colored landscape includes curious shapes, like the tall boulders of the Seven Sisters and the intricately shaped Elephant Rock. Rainbow Vista breaks from the usual red wash—its canyons, domes, towers, and ridges sparkle various colors in the sun. parks.myov

JOSHUA TREE JOURNEY,

CALIFORNIA

Drive amid 800,000 acres (323,749 ha) of California desert landscape along Joshua Tree National Park's Park Boulevard, connecting 1-10 and Calif. 62. Midway, Queen Valley is a good place to linger and gaze at vast groves of trees. You may also take Geology Tour Road, 18 miles (29 km) of dirt track winding past the park's distinctive natural rock sculptures, rounded by erosion.

• MIDDLE EARTH, NEW ZEALAND

Fans of *The Lord of the Rings* can follow the small footsteps of Hobbits and set off for Mordor—New Zealand's North Island Volcanic Plateau. Leave from Hamilton in the idyllic waikato region, and head east for Hobbiton (filmed around Matamata).

Farther south is the brooding, tortured terrain of Middle Earth's Emyn Muil and Mount Doom, filmed around Mount Ruapehu. The end of the journey is Wellington, where Peter Jackson based his production.

TROPIC OF CAPRICORN, AUSTRALIA

From Bundaberg—the "Gateway to the Great Barrier Reef"—drive 400 miles (644 km) north to Mackay, past lakes, coastal towns, and mountains. For a detour, take a ferry from Rosslyn Bay to reach the beautiful beaches of Great Keppel Island. australia.com

THE ROUTE TO THE BASE OF EVEREST, CHINA/TIBET

Tibet's mystical capital, Lhasa, is an excellent place to adjust to the altitude before your ascent into the Himalaya. From here, take the Friendship Highway south, past isolated monasteries and enchanting villages to Everest's base camp at 17,087 feet (5,208 m).

tibetdiscovery.com

• CENTRAL HIGHLANDS, ICELAND

Folklore has it that supernatural beings await travelers along the interior roads of Iceland's Central Highlands. The current dangers of the Kjölur road (F35) between Haukadalur in the south and Blönduós in the north are flash floods and rough terrain, but let nothing stand in the way of the drive through a wonderland of ice caves and mountains colored black by geothermal forces.

iceland tour is thou ard.com

DN57B, ROMANIA

Start in Oraviţa, following the quiet DN57B north through fabulous blooms in spring, and head round to the small mining towns of Steierdorf, via Anina, where Europe's oldest human remains (some 40,000 years old) were found.

romaniatourism.com

• TOLEDO TO CÁCERES, SPAIN

Head west from Toledo into Extremadura, the starkly dramatic homeland of many of the *conquistadores*. Having explored Toledo's cathedral, its alcázar (castle), and the house of the painter El Greco, follow twisting mountain roads to Guadalupe, whose shrine of Our Lady is one of Spain's holiest pilgrimage sites. Continue west to the astonishing cities of Trujillo and Cáceres, enriched by the gold of the Americas. Spain.info

• PARQUE NACIONAL DA PENEDA, GERÊS, PORTUGAL

The vistas on this easterly drive on the N203 from Ponte de Limato Ponte de Barca are uniquely lush and pastoral. There are gorse, pine trees, black sheep, horses, goats, and long-horned barrosau cattle. visitportugal.com

• THE GRIFFON'S ROUTE, SARDINIA

The rugged road running south from the medieval town of Alghero edges eroded, lavender-covered cliffs that dive down to the sea. Scan the skies above for griffon vultures. From the ancient town of Bosa, 30 miles (48 km) south of Alghero, return to Alghero along the inland mountain route. It is fraught with hairpins and switchbacks but passes the prehistoric settlement of Nuraghe Appiu.

italiantourism.com

• RIVER GALANA, KENYA

From Mombasa, head 70 miles (113 km) northwest to Tsavo East National Park, entering at the Bachuma Gate. Drive northeast across savanna to the Lugard Falls, a series of white-water rapids on the River Galana. Follow the road along the river as it flows to the Indian Ocean and exit the park at the Sala Gate. Malindi, the closest big town, is 70 miles (113 km) east.

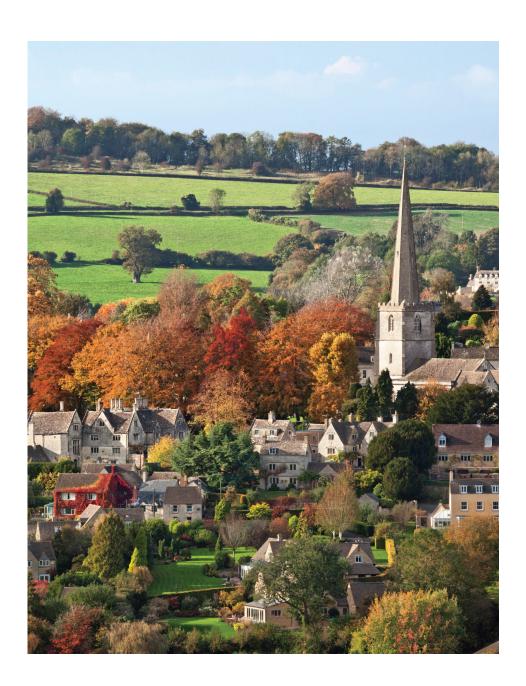
kws.go.ke/content/tsavo-east-national-park

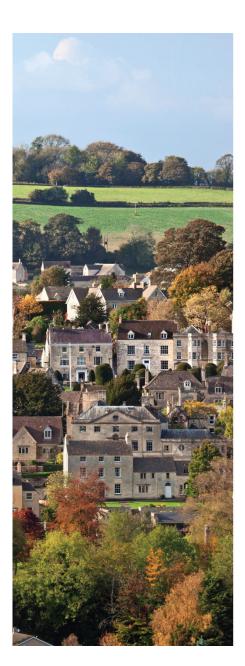
ORANGE RIVER, SOUTH AFRICA

Start from Upington, a town on the edge of the Kalahari Desert, and take the R359, which runs beside the Orange River, passing vineyards and fruit farms along the way. After 50 miles (80 km) you reach the Augrabies Falls National Park, meaning "place of the big noise," where you can watch as the Orange River plunges 230 feet (70 m) into the ravine below.

kalaharisafaris.co.za

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED | 177





VILLAGE BYWAYS

illages are little worlds within worlds that seem to lie outside time. Deep in the countryside, they perch precariously on rocky crags, hide themselves away up narrow green lanes, or dream their dreams in the shadows of ancient castles. On maps, their names are marked in the smallest print—if, indeed, they appear at all. But for travelers with a sense of romance, these are destinations worth getting lost for. Small they may be, but they are as varied as the landscapes in which they are set and throb with their own kinds of life. A journey to North Carolina's Outer Banks leads to tiny fishing villages $tucked\,amid\,high\,sand\,dunes\,and\,seas capes\,stretching$ out to far horizons. The devout farmers and craftsmen of Indiana's Amish country preserve a world of horse $drawn\,buggies, carpentry\,workshops, and\,immaculate$ $farms.\,Romanian\,shepherds\,in\,southern\,Transylvania$ paint their houses in extravagant colors and don costumes handed down through generations, while in the green heart of southern England, a leisurely tour of the Cotswolds reveals villages of honey-colored stone, with church towers and ruined abbeys dotted among gently rolling hills.

The steeple of St. Mary's parish church looks down on the Cotswold village of Painswick and its famed 18th-century yew trees.

VILLAGE BYWAYS I 179

ST. JOHN RIVER VALLEY DRIVE

Well-kept farms and historic communities of genteel Victorian homes punctuate a beautiful landscape of wooded hills and pastures along the valley of the mighty St. John River. Indulge in a game of croquet in Victorian Fredericton to complete the period feel.

he wooded wilderness of the St. John River Valley basin attracted settlers from France, Britain, and the U.S. from around 1785. Begin in francophone Edmundston with a visit to the reconstructed Fortin du Ptit Sault Blockhouse, just one part of a long line of British defenses in the area. Both powers wanted sovereignty over the area, and you can see why as you follow Trans-Canada 2 south through lush, fertile countryside of forested hills with views of the grand St. John River. Much of the valley's farmland is devoted to potato growing. The river, which now forms the border between Canada and the U.S., changes dramatically at Grand Falls, where it plunges 80 feet (24 m) and rushes along a rocky chasm to a riverbed littered with huge wells worn into the rocks. Continue through pastoral landscapes and the village of Aroostook, once a major railroad junction, and on to the small community of Hartland, where the world's longest covered bridge crosses the river. Pass through Woodstock, the oldest fown in New Brunswick and home to many fine Victorian buildings, and continue to Kings Landing Historical Settlement (see Hidden History).

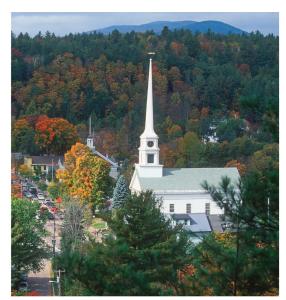
The highway follows the waterway southeast to Fredericton, New Brunswick's riverside capital. The city, built well inland to avoid American incursions, has a strong neocolonial feel with elm-lined streets and regency homes. The British Army's presence is still felt in the Historic Garrison District, now Fredericton's cultural heart with a blend of museums, music, art, and historical reenactments, including the Changing of the Guard (July and August). The city's fine historical buildings include the Second Empirestyle Provincial Legislative Assembly Building and Christ Church Cathedral with its towering spire.

CLERC Comparison Connection Control of the Control

FROM: Edmundston, Canada
To: Fredericton, Canada
RoAD: Trans-Canada 2
DISTANCE: TO miles (273 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: July and August
PLANNING: Although winters are
beautiful, most attractions are
open only in July and August.
Fall color is best in September
and October.
tourismnewbrunswick.ca

At Kings Landing Historical Settlement, reenactors show how farmers would have used a team of oxer





At the heart of the tiny village of Stowe is its classic New England church, completed in 1863.

VERMONT

VERMONT 100

Vermont 100 divides the state of Vermont in two, north to south, paralleling the rugged Green Mountains as it passes through beautiful, peaceful scenery and classic New England villages, with spectacular mountain views all the way.

ravel north along Vt. 100 from the village of Wilmington, past Haystack Mountain and the north branch of the Deerfield River, before climbing to West Dover, one of the loftiest villages in Vermont. Traverse the southern section of Green Mountain National Forest, descending $through dense \,woods \,to \,North \,Wardsboro, \,a \,village \,of \,small \,restaurants, general \,stores, and \,craft \,stores.$ $Continuing along the West \ River \ Valley \ and \ through \ the \ village \ of \ Jamaica, bear \ right \ at \ Rawson ville.$ Soon you reach Weston, a classic Vermont village with a bandstand on the green, white steeples, and cradling hills. Drive on through forested hills and the former factory town of Ludlow, passing tranquil, $tree-lined\ Lake\ Rescue, followed\ by\ Echo\ and\ Amherst\ Lakes-strung\ together\ by\ the\ Black\ River.\ The$ $road \ follows \ the \ river \ as \ it \ climbs \ past \ Killington \ Peak, a \ mecca \ for \ skiers, and \ heads \ into \ mountainous$ terrain along the edge of the northern section of Green Mountain National Forest, to the village of $Pitts field. \, Skirting \, pastures \, and \, corn fields \, along \, the \, floor \, of \, the \, steep \, White \, River \, Valley, \, the \, road \, passes \, road \, pas$ $through \, Talc ville \, and \, Rochester, the \, prettiest \, town \, along \, this \, stretch. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, valley \, narrows \, past \, Granville, \, and \, respectively. \, The \, vall$ $and the road enters \, Granville \, Gulf \, Reservation, \, where \, summer \, foliage \, and \, jutting \, escarpments \, shade \, in the road enters \, Granville \, Gulf \, Reservation, \, where \, summer \, foliage \, and \, jutting \, escarpments \, shade \, jutting \, escarpments \, jutting \, e$ the road. At Moss Glen Falls, a series of cascades zigzags through the trees. After Waitsfield, drive past $at \, Waterbury \, (see \, Highlights). \, Soon \, you \, reach \, Stowe, \, a \, romantic \, village \, clustered \, around \, a \, spire-topped \, and \, contract \, c$ church. After Morrisville, the terrain grows wilder as moose and bears abound. Beyond Lowell, the mountains open to broad vistas as you approach Newport.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Beyond Amherst Lake, take Vt. 100A to President Calvin Coolidige State Historic Site in iny Plymouth Notch. You can also tour Plymouth Cheese Factory, established by the president's father, the Florence Cilley General Store, the post office, several barrs displaying farming tools of the era, and the dance hall that served as the Summer White House.

Just north of Waterbury village, after crossing I-89, you come to **Ben and Jerry's** ice cream factory, where you can take a tour to see gourmet ice creams being made and taste the flavors of the day.

Just beyond Ben and Jerry's, on the right, is **Cold Hollow Cider Mill**, where you can watch apples being pressed into cider.

FROM: Wilmington, Vermont TO: Newport, Vermont ROAD: Vt. 100 DISTANCE: 188 miles (303 km) DRIVING TIME: 5 hours WHEN TO GO: Late spring through mid-fall PLANNING: Visit-vermont.com, vermontvacation.com



VILLAGE BYWAYS | 181



In Kent Falls State Park, a few miles north of Kent, a tributary of the Housatonic River has eroded a beautiful waterfall out of the marble bedrock.

| CONNECTICUT |

LITCHFIELD HILLS

Tucked into Connecticut's northwest corner, just hours from the bustle of New York City, the Litchfield Hills are the epitome of the pastoral New England landscape. This quiet drive meanders through picturesque villages and visits some of the state's finest parks.

he town of Litchfield, southwest of Torrington on U.S. 202, was settled in 1719 and is the picture of an ideal New England community, with a lovely village green surrounded by elm trees and $\,$ colonial buildings. Continue southwest to the White Memorial Conservation Center, a wildlife sanctuary with 35 miles (56 km) of trails leading through fields, ponds, swamps, and woodlands. At Bantam, take Conn. 209 south along the shores of Bantam Lake, Connecticut's largest natural lake, popular with boaters and anglers. Turn south at the tiny town of Washington to pick up Conn. 199 as it twists its way to the Institute for American Indian Studies, where you can visit an authentically reconstructed Algonquian village. Follow Conn. 199 and 67 west to New Milford to stroll across Connecticut's largest village green and explore the riverside town's historic homes and churches. Continue on U.S. $202\,through\,pictures que\,New\,Preston,\,packed\,with\,antiques\,shops,\,to\,the\,turnoff\,for\,Lake\,Waramaug\,Albert and\,Albert and Albert and\,Albert and Albert and\,Albert and\,Albert and\,Albert and\,Albert and\,Albert an$ State Park, where you can swim or picnic at one of Connecticut's loveliest lakes. Looping around the lake, you come to Hopkins Vineyard, where you can take a tour of the winery and enjoy a tasting. New $Preston\,Hill\,Road\,rambles\,west\,to\,the\,covered\,Bulls\,Bridge\,over\,the\,Housatonic\,River.\,Take\,U.S.\,7\,north$ to reach Kent, and when you have explored its well-preserved old houses, antiques shops, and art galleries, continue north and then turn west on Conn. 4 to the Sharon Audubon Center, dedicated to the conservation of birds and other wildlife, where 11 miles (18 km) of trails wind past ponds, streams, fields, and marshlands. Continue through the town of Sharon on Conn. 41, past Lake Wononskopomuc, and $stop\,off\,in\,Salisbury.\,Go\,through\,Canaan\,on\,U.S.\,44, past\,the\,1872\,Union\,Station, and\,on\,through\,Norfolk, and\,on\,through\,Nor$ home of Yale School of Music and Art and Infinity Hall, and then on Conn. 8 to return to Torrington.

FROM: Loop route from Litchfield, Connecticut ROADS: US. 202, Conn. 209, 109, 67, U.S. 7, Conn. 4, 41, U.S. 44, Conn. 8

DISTANCE: 188 miles (303 km)

DRIVING TIME: 5 hours

WHEN TO GO: Late spring through mild-fall

PLANNING: litchfieldhills.com



NORTH CAROLINA

OUTER BANKS SCENIC ROUTE

The arc of slim barrier islands, more than 100 miles (160 km) long, that stretches out from the mainland, protecting the coast from the battering Atlantic, includes Cape Hatteras National Seashore and coastal villages where history and beauty share the spotlight.

rom the mainland, cross Currituck Sound on U.S. 158 to reach the Outer Banks, then turn south. The road passes through Kill Devil Hills, where you can see the Wright Brothers National Memorial on the site where they made the world's first powered airplane flight in 1903. A little farther on, Jockey's Ridge State Park boasts the highest living sand-dune system (130 feet/40 m high) on the East Coast—a popular spot for hang gliding. Turn east here down one of the side roads that lead to N.C. 12, which hugs the coastline on its way south. The road passes beach houses at the resort town of Nags Head and then threads its way through Cape Hatteras National Seashore, a 70-mile (113 km) sweep of protected coastline that extends to Octacoke Inlet. Driving through the grassy marshlands of Bodie Island, you pass more dunes at Coquina Beach, where you can stop to search for seashells, and lonesome Bodie Island Lighthouse on Albemarle Sound.

Cross Oregon Inlet onto Hatteras Island, taking in sweeping views of the Atlantic Ocean to the east and Pamilico Sound to the west as you approach Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, which attracts more than a million migratory birds in spring and fall. It's also a nesting ground for the threatened loggerhead sea turtle. Pass through the quiet beachside villages of Rodanthe, Waves, and Salvo, with their weathered ocean-front houses, stacks of crab pots, and boats. Traveling south past an endless stretch of dunes and wind-pruned shrubs, you should find a quiet patch of beach. Farther on is Buxton, a mellow resort town popular with anglers and windsurfers, where you can visit the famous Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. The north end of Buxton Woods is here, and offshore you can see the Diamond Shoals, which have caused many ships to run aground. The road winds around the woods to Frisco and on to Hatteras, a unique fishing community and home to the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum. From Hatteras, take the free ferry to Ocracoke Island and pickup N.C. 12to Ocracoke. The island's only settlement, its fishing village has sandy, shaded streets and features the second oldest operating lighthouse in the U.S. It is also home to the ghost of Blackbeard, the notorious pirate, who was killed here in 1718.

FROM: Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina To: Ocracoke, North Carolina ROADS: U.S. 158, N.C. 12 DISTANCE: 80 miles (129 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 hours WHEN TO GO: Spring and fall PLANNING: During summer, the drive may take longer due to the route's popularity and occasional delays on the ferries. outerbanks.org







AMISH CULTURE AND CRAFTS

 $This short \ drive \ across \ northern \ Indiana's \ Amish \ country \ features \ well-groomed \ farms$ $and\ quaint\ villages,\ of fering\ a\ look\ into\ a\ traditional,\ rural\ way\ of\ life,\ where\ religion$ and community thrive and modern machines are shunned.



f you're touring in an RV or mobile home, you'll be very welcome in the riverside community of Elkhart

(see Stay a While), birthplace of automobile touring. From Elkhart, head east on busy U.S. 20. Veer north at Ind. 13, to reach Middlebury, a small town in the heart of Amish country. As you turn right onto East Warren Street (which begins as County Rd. 16, then turns into 250N), you'll immediately

notice the difference, with hitching posts for horses outside the county store and shops selling locally

made food. Here, barns have gambrel roofs and trim, white-frame houses line the road, horses graze

in lush pastures, and corn, rye, oats, and hay grow in well-kept fields. Drive slowly as you're likely to

An Amish store in Shipshewana sells a colorful array of goods.

FROM: Elkhart, Indiana To: Lagrange, Indiana ROADS: U.S. 20, Ind. 13, County Rd. 16, 250N, Ind. 5, 200N, Ind. 9

| HIGHLIGHTS |

South of Elkhart, along Ind. 19, is the divine **American Countryside**Farmers **Market**, housed in and around an Amish-built barn. Come hungry and snack on homegrown fruits, cheeses, pies, and many other tempting treats.

than 50 classic Hudson cars, race cars, and hot rods. The Menno-Hof Amish/Mennonite Visitor Center in **Shipshewana** tells the history of the Anabaptists and how they came to settle in Indiana.

DRIVING TIME: 1 hour WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall PLANNING: amishcountry.org

come across horse-drawn buggies. Three miles (5 km) east of Middlebury, you can stop by Guggisberg Deutsch Käse Haus to watch Colby and Colby Jack cheeses being made. Soon you enter bustling Shipshewana, where shoppers flock to the Midwest's largest flea market and the village's specialty retailers offer $\,$ hand crafted items and home-style cooking. To learn more about the Amish, turn south at Van Buren Street (Ind. 5) to reach the Menno-Hof Amish/Mennonite Visitor Center (see Highlights). Escorted horse-drawn buggy tours around typical Amish working farms are available. Then turn onto Farver Street (200N) and head east, back into farm country. The road passes Wana Cabinets and Furniture, custom builders of oak furniture. More than half of the area's Amish heads of household work as carpenters and in woodworking. When you reach Ind. 9, turn right into Lagrange, where you can tour the County Courthouse, a marvelous redbrick building dating from 1878.

I STAY A WHILE I Bikhart has a number of interesting museums, including the RV/MHHall of Fame, with antique vehicles dating from 1913. The Midwest Museum of American Art's collection includes artists such as Norma Rockwell, George Luks, and Thomas Sully. The National New York Central Railload Museum brings the history of the railroad to life with full-size and toy trains and a collection of memorabilia from stations and railroad coars.

OPPOSITE: Horse-drawn buggies are a common sight in the Amish towns of Indiana.

DISTANCE: 28 miles (45 km)



VILLAGE BYWAYS | 185



The small house where Lyndon B. Johnson was born is part of the LBJ Ranch near Johnson City.

TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

 $Rolling\ hills\ and\ plunging\ gorges\ are\ typical\ of\ the\ old-world\ charm\ of\ this\ area\ of\ central$ $Texas.\ This\ route\ combines\ dramatic\ sections\ of\ road,\ colorful\ towns,\ and\ great\ sweeps\ of$ open countryside.

est out of Oak Hill, U.S. 290 heads into the hills. The first few miles provide glimpses of the plains as you ascend the Edwards Plateau. The landscape is scattered with limestone rubble, gnarled oaks, and shrubby hills and ridges. Just west of the little hamlet of Henly $is a turn off to the right toward Pedernales Falls \, State \, Park, where \, a glorious \, waterfall \, in \, pretty \, woodlands \, a turn off to the right toward \, Pedernales \, Falls \, State \, Park, \, where \, a \, glorious \, waterfall \, in \, pretty \, woodlands \, a \, turn \, a \, t$ cascades over a series of tilted limestone steps. Farther north, on U.S. 290, is Johnson City, home of Lyndon B. Johnson (see Highlights), and Fredericksburg (see Highlights), a town with a 19th $century \, character \, and \, lingering \, German \, culture. \, Well \, worthwhile \, is \, an \, 18-mile \, (29 \, km) \, detour \, detour$ north on Farm Rd. 965 to Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, home of a 440-foot (134 m) high dome of pink granite, the second highest batholith on the continent. From Fredericksburg, head south on Tex. 16 across fertile country abutting the Pedernales River. Soon the landscape flattens and the road begins to twist and turn, descending to the $\,$ Guadalupe River Valley. Beyond Kerrville (see Highlights), Tex. 16 sweeps through splendid countryside with exhilarating hairpin bends, grand vistas, craggy mountains, and clear streams, before entering Medina, "apple capital of Texas." Continue through ranchland to Bandera (see Highlights), a town with a real cowboy flavor, then turn left at the intersection with Tex. 46, heading through low hills to Boerne, an antiques hub with German heritage Continue through rolling hills edged with oak and cedar to New Braunfels, Texas's oldest community.

HIGHLIGHTS |

At Lyndon B. Johnson National

Historical Park, just west of Johnson City on U.S. 290, the frame house that was LBJ's childhood home has been lovingly re-created, along with the complex where his forefathers first settled. Thirteen miles (21 km) farther on, grazing buffalo mark the LBJ Ranch, where Johnson was born, and the one-room school he attended. Nearby, Lyndon B. Johnson State Park and Historic Site includes a living history farm and a nature trail with plenty of wildlife.

The Admiral Nimitz State Historic Site and National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg hond the memory of Chester Nimitz, commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet during World War II.

The Museum of Western Art at Kerrville focuses on art and artists from the American West.

Bandera's **Frontier Times Museum** has exhibits on the Old West and on the town's 1852 founding.

FROM: Oak Hill, Texas To: New Braunfels, Texas ROADS: U.S. 290, Farm Rd. 965, Tex. 16, 46 DISTANCE: 280 miles (450 km) DRIVING TIME: 6 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: traveltexas.com



| CALIFORNIA |

THE GOLD RUSH TRAIL

 $Tracing\ the\ rolling,\ river-streaked\ foothills\ of\ the\ Sierra\ Nevada,\ Calif.\ 49\ is\ named\ after$ $1849, the year of the \ California\ gold\ rush,\ and\ this\ drive\ passes\ many\ of\ the\ mines\ and$ boomtowns that shaped the state's history.

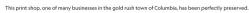
olumbia State Historic Park captures the feel of the gold rush era and is your starting point. $Take\ Parrotts\ Ferry\ Road\ north\ past\ Moaning\ Cavern,\ a\ multi-hued\ limestone\ cave,\ which\ you$ can descend by a rope or spiral stairwell. Go north on Calif. 4 to reach Angels Camp, a site once $rich\ in\ gold-bearing\ quartz, then\ continue\ on\ Calif.\ 49\ to\ Mokelumne\ Hill, one\ of\ the\ largest\ gold\ rush$ towns. At Jackson, you find the Kennedy Mine—the deepest mine in the U.S.—and a little farther north lies Sutter Creek, its charming main street lined with classic buildings of the era. Backtrack to Ridge $Road, and \ head\ east\ through\ the\ oak-studded\ meadows\ of\ Indian\ Grinding\ Rock\ State\ Historic\ Park.$ Onward through the village of Volcano, take Rams Horn Grade, then turn left for the former stagecoach stop of Fiddletown. Return to Calif. 49, heading north to Placerville, where Hangtown's Gold Bug Park & Mine boasts the nation's only city-owned gold mine, and Coloma (see In Focus). Ahead lies wellpreserved Auburn, whose Gold Country Museum has a model mine tunnel and a working miniature stamp mill. After another half-hour drive, you can gaze down the main shaft at Empire Mine State Historic Park, where the oldest and richest mine produced 5.8 million ounces (164.4 million gm) of gold. A quick hop along Calif. 49/20 brings Grass Valley's North Star Mining Museum, where the world's $largest\ Pelton\ wheel\ extracted\ gold\ ore\ from\ quartz.\ The\ road\ threads\ through\ pine-clad\ hills\ to\ Nevada$ City, before passing through picturesque Downieville. A mile (1.6 km) beyond Sierra City lies Sierra County Historical Park and Museum at the Kentucky Mine, with exhibits on mining, skiing, logging,

IN FOCUS California gold was first discovered on January 24, 1848, by James Marshall at Coloma, on the land of local celebrity and sawmill-owner John Sutter, who planned to turn the area into agricultural land. Soon hordes of gold diggers swamped the area, destroying his plans. In Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park, Sutter's mill—the exact spot where gold was first seen—has been reproduced, together with a Chinese store, church, and other buildings of old Coloma.



FROM: Columbia State Historic Park, California To: Sierra County Historical Park and Museum at the Kentucky Mine, California ROADS: Parrotts Ferry Road. Calif. 4, 49, local roads, Calif. 49/20

DISTANCE: 196 miles (315 km) **DRIVING TIME: 4.5 hours** WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: parks.ca.gov







I CANADA | ALASKA |

YUKON GOLDEN CIRCLE

Myriad prospectors flocked to the Yukon's southwest corner during the Klondike gold rush.

Now scenic pleasures replace golden treasure along this glorious and varied drive in North

America's wildest landscape.



Colorful, beautifully preserved wooden shops line a street in the former gold rush town of Skagway.

egin in the Yukon's capital, Whitehorse (see Highlights), which sprang to life in 1897 during the gold rush, and head west along Alaska Highway (Hwy. D as it glides over the Yukon Plateau's southern fringe. Stop at the Long Ago Peoples Place in Champagne, where traditions of the Southern Tutchone people, who avoided European contact until the mid-19th century, are still practiced. The road soon picks up the Dezadeash River and heads toward the Kluane Ranges. This line of glacial peaks dwarfs the crossroads town of Haines Junction and extends along the eastern front of Kluane National Park Reserve. Head south on Haines Road (Hwy. 3), stretching your legs at Kathleen Lake, where rocky peaks burst 5,000 feet (1,524 m) up from the water's edge. At the log-cabin village of Klukshu, watch Southern Tutchone trap, fillet, and dry fish during the summer and fall spawning runs. Farther south, Tutchone gather at Dalton Post to catch salmon with gaff hooks on long poles. The highway soon climbs into British Columbia and emerges from the trees.

Chilkat Pass marks the border with Alaska. From here, you begin a 4,000-foot (1,220 m) plunge, swinging past jagged, glacier-covered mountains and through forest to the broad floor of the Chilkat River valley. In late fall, up to 4,000 American bald eagles—the world's greatest concentration—roost in the cottonwoods and feed on salmon. The small port of Haines overlooks a fjord gripped by 6,000-foot (1,830 m) peaks and includes the Chilkat Center for the Arts, where Tlingit dancers interpret their legends. Downtown, the Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center summarizes pioneer history and interprets Tlingit culture through artifacts such as woodcarvings. From here, board the Alaska Marine Highway ferry, and cross the water to Skagway (see Highlights). A major gateway during the gold rush, this town was once a lawless place, controlled by gangster "Soapy" Smith. The prospector's story is told at the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park visitor center in Skagway. Take South Klondike Highway (Hwy. 2), climbing out of the gorge at White Pass. The descent follows a gentler landscape, shimmering with huge lakes. In Carcross, explore the Matthew Watson General Store, Yukon's oldest shop, before returning across the Canadian border to Whitehorse.

OPPOSITE: A motorcyclist travels the deserted Alaska Highway 1 toward Kluane National Park Reserve.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

At Whitehorse, visit the S.S. Klondike
National Historic Site to view a huge
1930s paddle wheeler. Guides lead
you through the ship's cargo deck,
engine room, cabins, and

From Skagway, take the White Pass & Yukon Route Railroad, a vintage narrow-gauge train that climbs up through the Skagway River gorge to emerge onto the alpine meadows of White Pass, accending almost 3,000 feet (915 m) in just 20 miles (32 km). The railroad took miners to the Canadian border and still visits Bennett, a gold rush-era ghost town. A round trip takes about three hours.

FROM: Loop route from Whitehorse, Canada ROADS: Hwys. 1, 3, 2 DISTANCE: 487 miles (785 km) DRIVING TIME: 9 to 10 hours WHEN TO GO: Mid to late

PLANNING: Fit your trip around the ferry schedule from Haines. Ferries are not daily, often run at inconvenient times, and fill up in advance. Bring your passport as the route crosses international borders. travelyukon.com





Believers take part in a purification ceremony in the sacred baths at Tirta Empul temple in Tampaksiring

I INDONESIA I

BALI HIGHLANDS DRIVE

Spangled with emerald-green rice paddies, waterfalls, and Hindu shrines, the highlands between Ubud and Mount Batur embody the enduring allure of Bali. With opportunities for hiking, hot springs, and boating along the way, there's also plenty of off-road adventure.

olcanoes have determined much of Bali's geography, not just the celebrated crater lakes and black-sand beaches, but also a road network through the highlands that follows the crest of ancient volcanic ridges. Those ridge roads form the backbone of a circular drive through countryside beyond Ubud, a hip highlands town renowned for its chic hotels, art galleries, and gourmet eateries. The loop starts with a six-mile (9.6 km) drive to Tegalalang and a short hike to the chromatic rice terraces behind the roadside shops. Snap a selfie and cruise down the Kedisan road to Tampaksiring village, flanked by the rock-hewn Gunung Kawi royal burial complex and the sacred bathing pools of the Tirta Empul hot springs temple. Jalan Tirta is the start of a half-hour drive along a volcanic ridge to Kintamani village on the heights above Lake Batur. You can admire Bali's largest lake from a distance or follow a winding road down to the shoreline for lunch or a soak at the waterfront Batur Natural Hot Spring. Back in Kintamani, follow Jalan Batur Tengah along the heights and then south to Besakih Temple. The island's single most important religious site, Besakih lies at the foot of active Mount Agung volcano. The compound sprawls across six levels and 23 separate shrines, and on any given day visitors are likely to come across some of the many festivals that unfold at Besakih. $Continue\ south\ along\ Jalan\ Raya\ Besakih\ to\ Tukad\ Cepung\ waterfall,\ which\ pours\ into\ a\ slot\ canyon\ at$ the end of a 15-minute hike from the parking area. Linger into the late afternoon before cruising into Gianyar, where the big night market kicks off around 6 p.m. each evening. After feasting on Bali's best street food, it's only a 20-minute drive back to Ubud and a good night's sleep.

EXCURSION Bali's most popular hike is a trek to the summit of **Mount Batur**, an active volcano that looms above the eponymous lake. The walk to the \$.633-foot (1.717 m) summit and back takes around 10 hours from Toyabungkiah village on the lakeshore. Hikers normally set off before 4 a.m. to catch the sunrise. Numerous outfitters offer guided treks that include hotel transfers.

FROM: Loop route from Ubud, Bali, Indonesia ROADS: Various DISTANCE: 72 miles (116 km) DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours WHEN TO 6.0: Year-round PLANNING: Given the many turns and lack of signage, it's advisable to hire a driver; avoid the November-March rainy season. indonesia.travel



GOURMET ROAD TRIPS

NEW ZEALAND

THE EAST CAPE

New Zealand's East Cape, on the smaller North Island, has resisted European influence, retaining a strong Maori character along with its stunning coastline of isolated beaches, rocky outcrops, and characterful cliff tops with fabulous views.

 $rom\,the\,pleas ant\,wine-growing\,city\,of\,Gisborne, take\,the\,SH35\,north\,past\,some\,fine\,surf\,beaches,$ before the road cuts inland through rolling green countryside. After 13 miles (21 km), turn east to Whangara, a coastal Maori town whose meeting house has a fabulous carved figure of a man $riding\ a\ whale, depicting\ the\ legend\ of\ the\ tribe's\ arrival\ in\ the\ bay.\ Return\ to\ the\ main\ highway,\ which$ hits the coast again on a beautiful sweep of Tolaga Bay's mudstone cliffs. Turn off to the Tolaga Bay Wharf and hike on Cook's Walkway, around the top of the cliffs and down to where Captain Cook landed in 1769 at Cook's Cove. Continue up the highway to Tokomaru Bay, a dilapidated town set on an inlet surrounded by gorgeous mountains. The atmospheric old wharf and derelict buildings here are relics from the town's better days. Farther on, Ruatoria, lying inland off the main road, is a center for the indigenous Ngati Porou people, while Tikitiki is notable for the beautiful St. Mary's Church, with its carved Maori entrance and interior of woven panels and carvings.

About halfway along the drive, tiny Te Araroa lies on scenic Kawakawa Bay and is home to the country's largest pohutukawa tree, at 131 feet (40 m) around. From here, a 12-mile (19 km) detour to East Cape brings you to a lighthouse that was the first building in the world to see sunrise until $American \, Samoa \, skipped \, the \, International \, Date \, Line \, in \, 2011. \, Return \, to \, the \, SH35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, you'll \, reach \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, the \, sh35, and \, soon \, the \, sh35,$ a great beach at Hicks Bay and, farther on, some incredible views at Lottin Point, which lies 2.5 miles $(4\ km)$ from the road. The SH35 follows the coast from Waihau Bay, past 65 miles (105 km) of beaches and rocky bays and cliff-top ocean views. You'll also pass many small Maori settlements, maraes (Maori meeting places), and historic churches. A picturesque church with a carved entrance and a steep spire stands on a promontory overlooking the ocean at Raukokore. The road winds and dips its way past a number of secluded beaches and beautiful Whanarua Bay. Continue down the coast to the town of Te Kaha with a stunning *marae*. The SH35 ascends Maranui Hill, offering panoramas of the coast, and passes more small settlements and lonely beaches before finishing in the Maori town of Opotiki.



FROM: Gisborne, New Zealand To: Opotiki, New Zealand ROAD: SH35 DISTANCE: 205 miles (327 km) **DRIVING TIME: 4.5 hours** WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Be sure to have a full tank of gas before you set out, and bring good walking boots if you plan to hike. newzealand.com

Drive along the unpaved road between Te Araroa and East Cape to witness one of the world's earliest sunrises





ROMANIA I

TRANSYLVANIAN VILLAGES

 $A\ leisurely\ drive\ in\ southern\ Transylvania\ takes\ you\ into\ the\ pastoral\ landscapes\ of\ the\ Cindrel\ Mountains.$ The route passes through some of the\ traditional\ villages\ that\ make\ up\ the\ so-called\ Boundaries\ of\ Sibiu,\ where\ shepherding\ is\ the\ chief\ vocation.



A farmer gathers hay in the rolling hill country around Sibiu.

15-minute drive south from medieval Sibiu (see Highlights) lies Rășinari, a classic Romanian village with cobbled streets and neat old houses. After exploring its attractive museum, set out in the direction of Sibiu, but take a left turn down a country lane, crossing the Sebeş River, onto the 106D toward Poplaca. Continue to the next village of Orlat, dominated by a 14th-century earth fortress, Cetatea Scurtă, and turn left onto the 106E. After 2 miles (3 km), turn left for Fântânele (see Highlights), its multicolored houses tucked into the surrounding hillside. Head west to Sibiel (see $Highlights), where the Biserica Sf.\ Treime\ (Church\ of\ the\ Holy\ Trinity)\ rises\ up, its\ 18th-century\ exterior$ belying the Byzantine flavor of the interior. Farther on, in Săliște, you can see ancient Transylvanian dances, such as the *căluş*, *brâu*, or *sârbă lui Ghiboi*, performed in the streets by men in black-and-white costume. From here, head west to Tilişca, a village of wooden houses and once the site of strong resistance, under the Dacian king, Burebista, to Julius Caesar's army. Follow the road through the mountains past Rod and Poiana Sibiului, to reach Jina, one of the most remote villages in the Mărginimea (Boundaries) region. Winding onward via Dobra, turn right at the next intersection, where $the Dobra\,River\,runs\,beside\,the\,road.\,Turn\,right\,again\,at\,the\,DN67C\,through\,Sugag\,and\,M\"{a}rtinie\,toward$ Căpâlna, where one of Transylvania's finest Dacian citadels, Dealul Cetății, lies just over a mile (2 km) south of the village. Continue through Săsciori, staying with the Sebeş River to Sebeş, centered on a Romanesque-Gothic church with some fine stone carvings. Drive east from here for 6 miles (9 km) on the DN1 and DN1, then turn right on the 106F for Cetatea Câlnic, a restored 12th-century fortress designated a World Heritage site and now serving as a cultural center.

IN FOCUS Hidden in the Dumbrava Forest, about 4 miles (6.5 km) south of Sibiu, lies the ASTRA Museum of Traditional Folk Civilization, Romania's largest ethnographic open-air museum. Its 237 acres (96 ha) of gentle rolling swards, woodlands, boating lakes, and ponds showcase the inventiveness of Romania's rural people, especially their clever use of wood. There is even a "witch's house," although, sadly, no witch.

OPPOSITE: The 240-foot (73 m) spire of the Lutheran cathedral towers over Sibiu's main square.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

An ideal side trip is the 12th-century town of **Sibiu**, with its colorful buildings characteristically arcade and with "eyes" in the roofs-small oval windows half-covered by tile "eyelics". Visit the splendid main square and the museum, which has excellent examples of Romanian art.

Fântânele's village museum has a cheerful collection of icons and rura crafts displayed in two rooms of a former 18th-century inn.

Sibiel's church grounds house the charming Zosim Oancea Museum, named for the local priest who created it, displaying more than 700 folk icons painted on glass.

FROM: Rășinari, Romania To: Cetatea Câlnic, Romania ROADS: 106D, 106E, DN67C, DN1, 106F

DISTANCE: 66 miles (105 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: A 4WD vehicle is
recommended for this trip.
romaniatourism.com



VILLAGE BYWAYS | 193



The tower of the church of the Taxiarchis (Archangels) overlooks a shady side street in Areopoli.

GREECE

ON THE PELOPONNESE

The harsh yet compelling landscape of the Mani, on a finger of the Peloponnese, is dotted with deserted villages of strange tower houses, Frankish castles, and aged Byzantine churches smothered inside with colorful icons—a hidden culture to intrigue the curious.

rom the Mani's largest west-coast town, Areopoli (see Highlights), head south on the main road, avoiding turnoffs. Even if you do accidentally go wrong, most roads will return to the main road as they usually just loop through villages. En route, you will often see tiny churches worth a visit. It takes about half an hour to reach the village of Alika, where you turn right for Vatheia, a cluster of narrow, stone tower houses atop a hill. Now silent and empty, the houses were once inhabited by feuding families—internecine warfare was endemic and such houses are characteristic of the peninsula. The adventurous can drive on via Porto Kagio to the southernmost tip of the Mani and admire the hill of Akra Tainaron—aka Cape Matapan, the legendary gateway to Hades. Retrace your steps to Porto Kagio, where a castle sits above the bay, then take the switchback road running up to join the main route just below another village of tower houses, Lagia. This stretch of coast feels very remote, with mountains dropping down to the sea. Continue north then west back to Areopoli via the pass at Pirichos. Pick up Hwy. 39 for lively Gytheio, the main town on the east coast. It has some good restaurants around its fishing harbor, the remains of a Roman theater, and great beaches nearby.

I HIDDEN HISTORY I Around 30 miles (48 km) north on the E961 from Gytheio, Mystras is a ruined Byzantine city, set on a hill at the edge of the Taygetos Mountains. The dominant feature of this atmospheric site is the castle, or kastro, offering superb views. The Despots' Palace is well preserved, with a 14th-century throne room where several Byzantine kings were crowned. At the bottom of the hill lies the Mitropolis, a cathedral dating from 1309, with original frescoes.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Follow the signs south from Areopoli for **Spilia Dirou** (Caves of Diros), 5 miles (8 km) away; a 30-minute boat ride takes you into a labyrinth festooned with stalagmites and stalactites. Waiting time for the boat increases in high seasor in high?

Another S miles (8 km) beyond the Caves of Diros, turn right for Agios Goorgios and the village of Mezapos. From here, you get a splendid view of Tigani, or "fiying pan" – named fix shape—a low-lying neck of rocky land supporting the remains of a Frankish castle. A 15-milute drive from Mezapos brings you to Agia Kyriaki, from where you can hike to Tigani, which takes about an hour.

FROM: Areopoli, Greece
TO: Gytheio, Greece
ROADS: Local Grods, Hwy, 39
DISTANCE: 70 miles (110km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Be sure to have a
full tank of gas and a supply of
drinking water before setting
out. Winds can be fierce, and it
is usually baking hot in summer.
Churches are sometimes locked,
so you may need to track down
the key holder to visit them.
zorbas.de/maniguide



ITALY

THE VALLE D'AOSTA

This exhilarating drive in northwestern Italy follows one of Europe's most beautiful valleys, justly renowned for its romantic villages and medieval castles set in high alpine scenery, and ends at the foot of Mont Blanc.

oved for its vineyards, Pont-St.-Martin is a village built around a small firstcentury B.C. Roman bridge. Set out from here on the SS26, and in a few minutes you pass Forte di Bard, noe of 70 or so fortresses for which the Valle d'Aosta is known. Yet more superb is the Castello di Issogne, a little farther along, built in 1498 by Georges de Challant, whose family controlled much of the valley for centuries. Across

the river lies the Castello di Verrès, of gaunt, military aspect. Take the SR45 at the village of Verrès, and head north to explore the Val d'Ayas, the prettiest of the side valleys en route. The village of Champoluc is 17 miles (27 km) away, where you can take a cable car to see Monte Rosa and Monte Cervino, the two highest Alpine peaks after Mont Blanc (15.781 feet/4,810 m). Return toward Brusson, and take the vertiginous route westward to St.-Vincent, home to one of Europe's largest casinos. Here, you meet the SS26 again and soon pass the Castello di Fénis, renowned for its exquisite frescoes and furniture. After around 18 miles (30 km), you reach Aosta, its center a delightful mix of Roman ruins, medieval churches, and tranquil old squares, with an impressive tally of monuments. Another 10 minutes along a local road takes you to Sarre castle (1710), used as a hunting lodge by Vittorio Emanuele II. Back on the SS26, you find two more castles at St.-Pierre, where the highway begins to climb into high Alpine country. The ski resort of Courmayeur is about 18 miles (30 km) away, with tiny La Palud just beyond. From here, the cable-car ride over Mont Blanc makes a dazzling end to the drive.

STAY A WHILE 1 Italy's oldest national park, the Parco Nazionale del Gran Paradiso, extends across 270 square miles (700 km) of majestic mountain scenery, encompassing several alpine villages. Take the side road from Sarre to Cogne, a good place to stay although the best scenery is a little deeper into the park. Lillaz is a peaceful village, and from here a short hike eastward along the valley brings you to the dramatic waterfall of Cascata di Balma. Valnontey is a busier village, and the trailhead to the Vittorio Sella mountain refuge, one of the park's most popular hikes.

A chamois obligingly poses in the Valle d'Aosta's Parco Nazionale del Gran Paradiso, a haven for wildlife.







THE TOP

1 SHIRAKAWA, JAPAN

Starting from Komatsu on the island of Honshu's Sea of Japan coast, Highway 360 meanders 50 miles (80 km) through the Japanese Alps to historic Shirakawa. Long isolated from the rest of Japan the entire village is a UNESCO World Heritage site owing to its A-frame, thatched-roof gasshōo-zukuri houses A number of the village ryokans and restaurants are housed in these traditional structures.

PLANNING: Located on the outskirts of Shirakawa, Hakusan National Park offers hiking trails to waterfalls, lakes, peaks, and a primeval beech forest, travel.kankou-gifu.jp/en

2 PISAC, PERU

Heading north from Cusco, Highway 28G runs past the Inca ruins at Q'enco and Puka Pukara to the village of Pisac in the Sacred Valley. Besides Spanish colonial relics, Pisac boasts a miniature ersion of Machu Picchu, called Inca Pisac, which crowns a hill above the town.

PLANNING: Pisac's handicraft and food market is the best in the Cusco region, especially the sprawling Sunday morning version. peru.travel/en-us

3 ASILAH, MOROCCO

Break up the 160-mile (256 km) drive between Tangier and Rabat with a day or two in Asilah, a stunning whitewashwalled village with a miniature medina, 15th-century Portuguese defenses, and a tasty blend of Iberian and North African cuisine. Asilah also boasts some of the best beaches in northwest Morocco.

PLANNING: Two routes connect Tangier and Rabat: the modern A1 expressway and the scenic N1 beside the shore. visitmorocco.com/en

4 LAMU, KENYA

Kenya's scenic coast road stretches 200 miles (333 km) up the shore to Kikoni Landing, where ferries flit across the channel to Lamu village. Considered the bestpreserved Swahili settlement in East Africa, Lamu's waterfront is spangled with ancient coral-stone buildings and traditional dhow sailing craft.

PLANNING: Boutique beach hotels and hip cafés are part of Lamu's modern tourism scene. lamutourism.org

CHARMING VILLAGES

Thatched houses, whitewashed walls, medieval castles, and great places to eat and drink. From the Arctic to the tropics, villages offer a near-endless variety of road-trip surprises.

5 HANGA ROA, CHILE

The only village on Easter Island offers an exotic blend of Latin America and Polynesia—and even a few *moai* (giant stone heads). Many of the island's archaeological sites are scattered along a 30-mile (50 km) loop drive through Rapa Nui National Park.

PLANNING: The national park drive can be undertaken on guided tours or by renting you own vehicle; roads are in good shape and well signposted. easterisland.travel

6 MANALI, INDIA

Tucked high in the Indian Himalaya, Manali is both a mountain resort and spiritual destination that revolves around a unique 16th-century wooden temple called the Hidimba Devi, Highway 29 leads north to 13,000-foot (4,000 m) Rohtang Pass and south through the scenic Kulu Valley to more sacred shrines.

PLANNING: Manali's outdoor adventure menu ranges from summer hiking and mountain biking to winter skiing and snowboarding.

himachaltourism.gov.in/destination/manali

7 OBERWESEL, GERMANY

Flanked by medieval castles and stupendous cliffs. Bundestrasse 9 makes its way down the Rhine Gorge between Bingen

OPPOSITE: The traditional thatched-roof house of Shirakawa, Japan, covered in a blanket of winter snow

and Koblenz, with Oberwesel village as the best place to while away a day or two. Founded in Roman times, the walled village offers overnights at romantic Schönburg Castle as well as German cuisine and locally made wines at Weinstube Zum Lamm and the Historische Weinwirtschaft.

PLANNING: Ride the Autofähre Kaub to the right (east) bank and gaze into the Rhine Gorge from the cliff-top Loreley Culture & Landscape Park. oberwesel.de/no_cache/en/welcome-page

8 NARSAQ, GREENLAND

Founded by Eric the Red in the 10th century, Narsaq boasts the remains of a Viking church and longhouse, plus a local museum with Norse artifacts. Outside of town, gravel roads run beside deep, iceberg-filled fjords to sheep farms and hiking trails in the snowcapped highlands behind the coast.

PLANNING: Snowmobiles are the best way to drive the roads around Narsag during the long Greenland winter.
visitgreenland.com/destinations/narsac

9 CHIMAYÓ, NEW MEXICO

Located along the historic High Road (Route 76) between Sante Fe and Taos, Chimayó lies in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo mountains. The village is renowned for El Santuario de Chimavó, an early 19th-century adobe chapel with a reputation for miracles, which draws thousands of Catholic pilgrims from around the world. Others seek out the town for its heirloom chili peppers, used in dishes at the James Beard Award-winning Rancho de Chimayó Restaurante.

PLANNING: Chimayo's weaving workshops sell traditional New Mexico-style blankets, bags, rugs, and clothing. *holychimayo.us*

10 LISDOONVARNA, IRELAND

The old spa town of Lisdoonvarna is the ideal base for exploring County Clare in western Ireland. From the town square. it's just a 20-minute drive to the 500-foot (155 m) Cliffs of Moher and around an hour across the rocky highlands to Burren National Park.

PLANNING: Lisdoonvarna's celebrated Match-PLANNING: Listoonvarnas celebrated Match-making Festival (September) offers plenty of tra-ditional music, dance, and food even for those not seeking a romantic rendezvous. clare.ie



The landscape of the Val d'Orcia inspired some of the finest artists of the Renaissance.

ITALY

RENAISSANCE LANDSCAPES

Southern Tuscany is full of charming sun-drenched communities set amidst rolling hills where art and architecture have flourished for centuries. The region's fine wines and delicious cuisine provide a literal as well as visual feast.

rom Siena, head southeast through a distinctive landscape of bare, clay hills to the village of Asciano and its late 13th-century Romanesque-Gothic church. Take the scenic minor road south to Abbazia di Monte Oliveto Maggiore, a Benedictine abbey with some excellent medieval art. A few miles on you reach Buonconvento, a village whose ugly outskirts conceal a pretry medieval center. The road now climbs up to Montalcino, a walled village perched on a hilltop, crowned by its picture-perfect castle. Six miles (10 km) south is the Abbazia di Sant' Antimo, a glorious medieval abbey, isolated amidst verdant countryside. Drive east into the picturesque Val d'Orcia and the first community you reach on the SS323 is Castiglione d'Orcia, a small town of cobbled streets huddled around an imposing fortress. Close by is Bagno Vignoni, whose famous town square is not, in fact, a square at all but a large open jiscina, or pool, that bubbles with water from the sulfurous hot springs below. Once you have passed San Quirico d'Orcia, Pienza is the next stop. In the 15th century, Pope Pius II tried to turn the village into a model Renaissance city. The cathedral, papal residence, and a palace-ringed piazza still remain, forming the heart of one of Italy's most charming villages. Continue on the SS146 to Montepulciano, a classic hill town of 16th-century churches and palaces.

I STAY A WHILE INo drive through Tuscany is complete without a visit to the sky-rise towers of San Gimignane
Dubbed the "medieval Manhattan," the village is situated an easy hour's drive west of Siena. The famous towers—part
status symbol, part defense system—began to appear around 1150. The valled town also has some truly impressive
churches and the excellent Kuseo Civico, where a number of Sienese and Florentine masterpieces are on display. The
village is very popular during peak season (July and August) and parking can be a problem, so plan your trip carefully.

FROM: Siena, Italy
TO: Montepulciano, Italy
ROADS: SS438, SS451, SS323,
SS146, local roads
DISTANCE: 76 miles (120 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Wine-lovers should
visit in fall. visituscany.com



FRANCE

A DRIVE AROUND LES DENTELLES

The villages in northern Provence seem trapped in a time warp: cobbled streets lead past charmingly ramshackle houses, while medieval hilltop castles grandly survey the countryside dotted with vineyards and historic wineries.

fter exploring the small but lively town of Vaison-la-Romaine, cross the Roman bridge over the River Ouvèze as you leave the lower town, and turn left on the D938. Turn right on the D76 and head up the hill to Crestet, which has an 11th-century church and a 9th-century castle standing on top of the hill. Retrace your route to the D938, continuing to the old town of Malaucène, then take the D90 west, through the sweeping vistas at the Col de la Chaîne and up past Les Dentelles de Montmirail, the crests of chiseled limestone named for their resemblance to lace (dentelles). Soon you'll arrive at the hamlet of Suzette, where the view over Crête de St.-Amand and the mountains is the star attraction. Pass through tiny Lafare to reach Beaumes-de-Venise, best known for its Muscat wine, which you can taste in cellars along Avenue Raspail. The nearby chapel of Notre-Dame-d'Aubune was built in the 8th century, with its unusual tower added in the 12th.

Continue through flat wine country before taking the turnoff for sleepy Gigondas. The village is famous for its robust, powerful wine, and there are many wine cellars and cafés around the shaded central square, Place Gabriel Andéol. Leave the car and wander around the pretty lanes until you come across Ste.-Catherine's parish church. The hilltop town of Séguret awaits just down the road. Celebrated as one of France's most beautiful villages, its narrow streets wind past noble houses, restaurants, and galleries, as well as santon shops, where you can watch master artists create tiny painted ceramic figures. Continue north to the D88, heading east on the D975 to return to Vaison-la-Romaine.

IN FOCUS Throughout the region, almost every town stages a weekly traditional Provençal market, where everything from regional specialties, clothing, and souvenirs are available to sample and buy. For a morning at least, these historic towns spring to life as stalls take over the streets and cars are almost absent. The market comes to Vaison-la-Romaine and Beaumes-de-Venise every Tuesday, and to Malaucène on Wednesday. Try to arrive early in the morning to grab the best bargains.

FROM: Loop route from Vaison-la-Romaine, France ROADS: D938, D76, D90, D88, D975

DISTANCE: 40 miles (65 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Explore Séguret
on foot. There is a parking
lot on the right as you enter
the village.
avignon-et-provence.com





ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

| ENGLAND |

TWO COTSWOLD DRIVES

Easily accessible from London or Oxford, the tiny Cotswold villages, with their trademark golden-hued stone buildings, have retained their individual characters and remain some of the most beautiful and remote spots in England.



The River Windrush flows through the peaceful town of Bourton-on-the-Water.

he villages of the Cotswolds are quintessentially English, with old pubs looking out onto grassy greens or fantastic views that stretch for miles. This is two drives in one, centered around the 18th-century spa town of Cheltenham.

From Cheltenham, head east on the A40 through fields divided by hedgerows. Pass Northleach, where the impressive church of St. Peter and St. Paul, endowed by 15th-century wool merchants, reminds visitors of the town's role in medieval times. Wander through nearby Burford, a stone-built Georgian town with a buzzing high street. Then take

the A424 north, following signs to Upper Rssington then Bourton-on-the-Water, where tiny footbridges span the River Windrush. To escape the crowds, drive through the twin villages of Lower and Upper Slaughter, just northwest of Bourton, where picturesque cottages line the banks of the River Eye.

At Lower Swell, turn right on the B4068, which takes you east to Stow-on-the-Wold, the area's highest town, with an imposing marketplace where sheep are still sold. It is also famous for its antiques shops and as the site of some fierce fighting in the English Civil War. Take the A424 northwest, before

I SINKING A PINT OR TWO IN A PUB I England is renowned for its country pubs, and nowhere are they more common than in the Cotswolds. As you tour the area, you cannot fail to stumble across pubs hidden away in villages or perched unexpectedly on hillsides. The Donnington Way is a 62-mile (100 km) circular hike through the North Cotswolds that links the 15 public houses owned by the local Donnington Brewery—a delight for those who enjoy a well-earned, locally brewed pint (or two) after rambling through the pristine countryside. Traditionally, the hike begins in the ancient market town of Stov-on-the-Wold. Of course, the route can be done in sections, with the two closest pubs less than 2 miles (3 km) apart.

THESE PICTURESQUE
COMMUNITIES EVOKE
AN ENGLAND OF
TIMELESS CALM...
TO THE VISITOR,
[THE COTSWOLDS]
REMAINS THE RURAL
FANTASYLAND
PICTURED IN MY
CHILDHOOD BOOKS,
A BRIGADOON OF
BRITISHNESS.

-STEPHEN McCLARENCE

National Geographic writer

turning right to Chipping Campden, where a splendid Domesday painting dominates the 15th-century church of St. James. From here, return along the B4081 and take the A44 west to elegant Broadway, one of the showcase villages of the Cotswolds. Elizabethan houses and the historic Lygon Arms Hotel, patronized by both King Charles I and Oliver Cromwell, surround the village green. For a great view of the Severn Valley, climb up Broadway Tower at the top of Fish Hill.

Just to the south are the villages of Stanton and Stanway, built completely out of Cotswold stone, which glows gold on a sunny day. A little farther south, in Winchcombe, gargoyles surround the church, where Saxon carvings from the former Benedictine abbey are preserved. Walk up Castle Street to visit Sudeley Castle (see Highlights), then drive on to Belas Knap, a 5,000-year-old chambered cairn. Descend Cleeve Hill to return to Cheltenham. The town has a broad, tree-lined





 $Chipping\ Campden\ is\ one\ of\ the\ best-preserved\ towns\ in\ the\ Cotswolds.$

central promenade and some of Britain's best Regency architecture, including the domed Pittville Pump Room, built for balls, galas, and social intercourse.

The second drive heads south from Cheltenham on the A46 to Painswick, a pretty town sitting on a ridge, where gray limestone houses line the steep streets. Continue on to Stroud, where huge old textile mills dot the wooded Golden Valley. The road climbs up over the Cotswold Hills, bringing panoramic views. Take a left turn 4 miles (6 km) south of Nailsworth to reach Westonbirt, The National Arboretum, one of the world's largest collections of trees. including the so-called "toffee-apple" tree. Turn left from here onto the A433, then the minor roads through Shipton Moyne to Malmesbury, which has a beautifully carved Norman abbey.

Follow the B4014 northwest to Tetbury, another charming small town with a Georgian church, and rejoin the A433 toward the market town of Cirencester. In Roman times, Cirencester was the second largest city in Britain. The Corinium Museum has a fine collection of Romano-British material, and the Church of St. John the Baptist is one of the grandest in the region. The B4425 heads to Bibury, where a row of 7thr-century weavers' cottages is one of the areas' most photographed sites. Then take Fosscross Lane northwest to Chedworth Roman Villa. Passing Withington and Dowdeswell, you pick up the A40 back to Cheltenham.

FROM: Double loop from Cheltenham, England ROADS: A40, A424, B4068, B4632, A46, A433, B4014, B4425, minor roads DISTAMCE: 140 miles (225 km) DRIVING TIME: 4.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: COtsWolds.com

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Sudeley Castle, dating from the tenth century, has impressive gardens and fine paintings. Guided tours are available three days a week from March through October.

Snowshill Manor, near Broadway, is home to an extraordinary collection of 22,000 objects, including full suits of Samurai armor, amassed by architect, poet, and collector Charles Wade.

O'ER HILL AND DALE

This tour in the north of England visits charming historic towns and the remote villages of the Yorkshire Dales, offering a great opportunity to escape the crowds and delight in a peaceful rural landscape that teems with wildlife.

tart in Knaresborough, a town on the edge of the Dales that dates back to Norman times, where ruins of the 10th-century castle remain. Take the A59 west through the elegant gray-stone town of Harrogate, and continue to the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The $Dales\,are\,some\,of\,England's\,lushest\,countryside, with\,green\,fields\,dissected\,by\,dry-stone\,walls.$ Wharfedale runs northwest from the village of Bolton Abbey, home to the 12th-century Bolton Priory, whose great east window stands flanked by tall arches. Two miles (3 km) north, at the Strid, the River Wharfe crashes through a narrow, rocky channel around 6 feet (1.8 m) across. The B6160 runs up Wharfedale to the honeypot village of Grassington, where there are plenty of craft shops, cozy cafés, and hotels around a cobbled square. Continuing north, you see Kilnsey Crag rising dramatically from the road side—the spectacular rock formation is popular with climbers. Next is pretty $Kettlewell, a \ classic \ Yorkshire \ village \ with \ some \ excellent \ tearooms. \ Soon \ you'll \ reach \ Hubberholme,$ with its humpback bridge and a little church with a rare Tudor rood loft. Continue east as the road climbs up and over the hillside to West Burton. Wensleydale, famous for its cheese, is to the west on the A684. Stop in the village of Aysgarth to marvel as the River Ure tumbles down two long falls of limestone steps. In Bainbridge, head north briefly, then take the first road on the left. Just before $Hardraw, turn\ north\ and\ pass\ through\ Simonstone\ and\ some\ of\ the\ most\ spectacular\ scenery\ in\ the$ park. At the B6270, head east, passing the unspoiled villages of Swaledale, the most rugged of the Dales, as you approach Reeth. Finish the tour in Richmond, northeast of the National Park.

I HIDDEN HISTORY I One of England's finest small cities, York, 17 miles (27 km) east of Knaresborough on the A59, has ancient walls, old narrow streets, and a fabulous cathedral (or minster). There is a host of historical attractions close to the center, including York Castle Museum where you can see a reconstructed Vinciona street. Another top attraction stoke the Jorvik Viking Centre, with a "time-travel machine" taking you back to the city's Viking days, smells and all.



FROM: Knaresborough, England To: Richmond, England RAOAS: ASP, B6160, A684, B6270, local roads
DISTANCE: 67 miles (108 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Take care on these narrow, winding roads—you may need to stop for oncoming traffic. yorkshiredales.org.uk

 $The \ market \ town \ of \ Knaresborough \ features \ a \ 19th-century \ via duct \ 90 \ feet \ (27 \ m) \ above \ the \ River \ Nidd.$





The long sandy beach and tranquil water make Playa de los Genoveses hugely popular in summe

SPAIN

THE SECRET SPANISH COAST

This southeastern corner of Spain is the setting for a gentle drive along a coast where sectuded communities and ancient fishing villages have resisted the lure of mass tourism and still practice their traditional crafts.

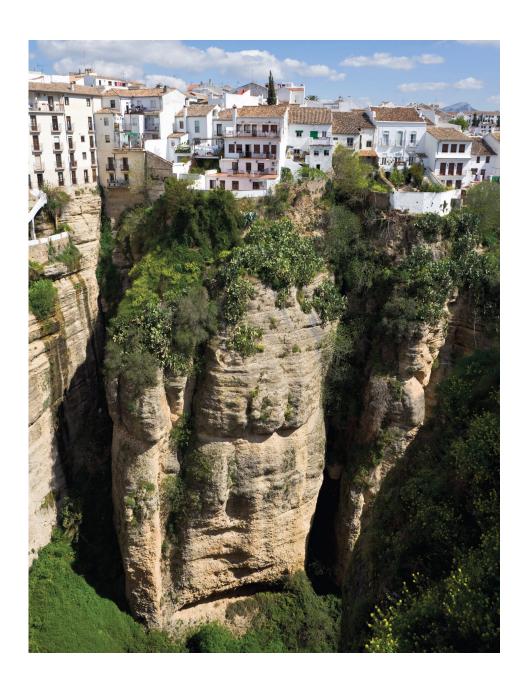
rom the 15th-century church at Nijar, head down the main street where shops sell Jarapas (woven rugs), grass baskets, and ceramics. Follow signs to Almería and San Isidro, meandering through the yucca, aloe, and windmill-dotted landscape of the Parque Natural de Cabo de Gata-Nijar. Just before Pozo de los Frailes, turn left toward Rodalquilar. After the 18th-century coastal fort in Los Esculos, take a right to the tiny fishing village of Isleta del Moro. Continue north, past the coastal views at Mirador de la Amatista, before arriving at Rodalquilar, a curious former gold-mining village. Farther north on the main road is a right turn for Las Negras—drive straight down to the beach. Return to the main road and drive northwest to Fernán Pérez, turning right toward Agua Amarga, passing farmland with almond trees, goats, and prickly pears. As the sea appears beyond the rocky hills, continue on to a junction with a paved road that brings you to Agua Amarga, a pleasant beach resort. Moving ever northward, pass Carboneras to skirt Playa la Calera, backed by clefts of high sierra, and find the most memorable views of the drive. At the built-up sweep of Mojácar Playa, strike inland to Mojácar village, perched spectacularly high above the blue Mediterranean.

I STAY A WHILE I deally placed to explore the southeasterly tip of the country, San José is a short drive south from Pozo de los Frailes. The easily negotiable dirt track circles around the headland. Turn off left to explore the beautiful cove at Playa de los Genoveses, or continue to Playa de Mônsul (with black sand) and enjoy the great view south to the Cabo de Gata lighthouse. These popular beaches have both been locations for numerous films, including Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade.

FROM: Nijar, Spain
TO: Mojácar, Spain
ROADS: Local roads
DISTANCE: 70 miles (110 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round



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SPAIN I

SPAIN'S WHITEWASHED VILLAGES

Explore the undulating landscape of southern Spain as the road winds through the Sierra de Grazalema, where clusters of gleaming white villages speckle the countryside, perilously located on imposing cliff edges or overlooking deep ravines.



Sample local specialties of this region, famed for its wine, cheese, and cured ham

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Hike the **Garganta Verde** between Grazalema and Zahara. The gorge is 1,310 feet (400 m) deep, and trails are steep in places.

Ronda is the center of Spain's bullfighting heritage. Visit the Museo Taurino in the 18th-century Plaza de Toros. The Feria Goyesca de Pedro Romero, held in early September, is the best time to watch a bullfight.

The wonderful **Palacio de Mondragón** mansion in Ronda, built
in 1314, was the residence of the great
Moorish king, Abb el Malik.

he western gateway to the Parque Natural Sierra de Grazalema is Arcos de la Frontera, a town set on a dizzying cliff top, with winding streets best explored on foot. The main square has a beautiful Gothic-Mudeiar church and a mirador (lookout point) with views over olive groves and orchards. The square also has the Moorish walls of the Castillo de los Duques and numerous baroque and Renaissance facades. Leave Arcos on the beltway, following signs for El Bosque, 19 miles (31 km) $east \, on \, the \, A372. \, You'll \, pass \, a \, densely \, cultivated \, landscape \, of \, olive \, groves, \, vegetable \, farms, \, and \, horse \, constant \, co$ ranches before the Sierra de Grazalema comes into view. The scenery becomes increasingly more spectacular en route to El Bosque, a small town at the base of the mountains where people flock for hiking, rock climbing, trout fishing, and hang-gliding adventures. Leave town on the A372, and stay on $the \ road\ as\ it\ turns\ left\ toward\ Grazalema.\ The\ road\ immediately\ climbs\ through\ eucalyptus\ and\ pine$ trees. After passing the village of Benamahoma, views of the valley open up and forest alternates with rock. The stark granite peak of Monte Simancón accompanies you to the 3,618-foot (1,103 m) pass of Puerto del Boyar, with its superb views of mountain ridges receding to the west. You may spot a roe deer here, or even a mountain goat, griffon vulture, or eagle. As the road descends, the dazzling whitewashed houses, red-tile rooftops, and church towers of Grazalema appear, wedged between the sierras of El Pinar and El Endrinal. Continue to Ronda (see Highlights), 20 miles (33 km) east. If you fancy a winding detour to a delightful village, take a turnoff to the left to Zahara, 1 mile (1.6 km) beyond Grazalema. Otherwise, continue through the rock-strewn valley where cork and holm-oak forests line the road and views of farmland dotted with white fincas (farms) open before you. Turn right onto the A376, which twists past granite cliffs to Ronda. Split in two by a steep gorge, this popular tourist town is home

FROM: Arcos de la Frontera, Spain To: Ronda, Spain ROADS: A372, A376 DISTANCE: 47 miles (76 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: The houses are meticulously whitewashed each spring, so visit in early summer to see the region at its finest.



andalucia.com

OPPOSITE: Ronda sits on a rocky precipice nearly 500 feet (150 m) above the Guadalevín River

to Spain's oldest bullring still in use and a museum devoted to bullfighting.



A stone figure of Jesus presides over the village of Castelo Rodrigo and the surrounding valley.

PORTUGAL |

MEDIEVAL STRONGHOLDS

This loop through northeastern Portugal links four fortified medieval villages that guarded the border with Spain and, despite their relative proximity, developed distinct histories and styles of military architecture.

rom Guarda, follow the N221 to Pinhel, past dry-stone walls, vineyards, and orchards, before the landscape evolves into barren, granite-strewn slopes. Huge boulders dominate the entrance to Pinhel, a venerable town where the remains of a 14th-century castle stand guard over the steep, cobbled streets, lichen-clad houses, and a flattened hilltop dominated by two sturdy towers. Leave on the main road past the cemetery and turn left at the bottom of the hill, following the N221 as it meanders north. Soon Castelo Rodrigo, a peaceful village with commanding views, comes into sight. Visit the citadel and the semi-ruined palace of Cristóvão de Moura, an evocative sight. The villagers burned the palace down in 1640, when they suspected their ruler of conspiring with the Spaniards. Head south on the N332 toward Almeida, where the massive, moated fortress, built in the Vauban form of a six-pointed star, was later used as an ammunition depot. Valk the ramparts and remember how Napoleon's troops laid siege to this stronghold in 1810 and blew up the depot. Head south on the N340 and N324 to the fortress-village of Castelo Mendo (see Hidden History), whose stone archway is guarded by two granite boars. It was named after the first commander of the fort, Mendo Mendes, appointed in the 14th century. The N16 returns you to Guarda, about 24 miles (39 km) west.

I HIDDEN HISTORY In the Battle of Fuentes de Oñoro in May 1811, the French forces were prevented from relieving the besieged Almeida, which marked a turning point in the fortunes of British General Wellington's Peninsular Campaign. The village's narrow streets remain almost as they were at the time of the battle, and it's easy to imagine the bloody carrage that took place. You are recommended to bring a guide to the battlefield with you to find the key spots. Fuentes de Oñoro is 11 miles (18 km) east from Castelo Mendo, just over the border in Spain.

FROM: Loop route from Guarda, Portugal ROADS: N221, N332, N340, N324, N16

DISTANCE: 87 miles (140 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: visitcentro.com



ALSO RECOMMENDED

CAPE BRETON VILLAGES, CANADA

The Nova Scotia fishing village of Neils Harbour connects to South Harbour along a rickety coastal road with some fantastic views. Lobster pots line the vistas. To taste their catch, carry on along the Cabot Trail to Pleasant Bay, where the Rusty Anchor is a popular restaurant.

cbisland.com

MOHAWK TRAIL, MASSACHUSETTS

The Mohawk Trail follows the path of a centuries-old trade route linking the Connecticut and Hudson River valleys. This section of U.S. 2—one of the oldest highways in the United States—is filled with pilgrim churches and more modern village charms, such as the Bridge of Flowers at Shelburne Falls.

nohawktrail.com

DOOR COUNTY, WISCONSIN

This peninsula drive offers a choice between cozy harbors on the Green Bay shore or the rolling surf of Lake Michigan. Bailey's Harbor, founded in 1851, has one of the largest wildflower preserves in North America. Enjoy the white steeples and picket fences of Ephraim, "the fruitful land." Continue south on U.S. 42 to reach Alogma, with views of fishing boats, shanties, and an impressive lighthouse.

BLUE MOUNTAINS, AUSTRALIA

Along New South Wales's Great Western Highway, a string of villages starting with Glenbrook welcomes you with art galleries and gardens. The Falls Gallery is one of these establishments—housed in a turn-of-the-century cottage a few minutes' walk from the picnic area at Falls Reserve. Leura hosts an annual garden festival in October. End the drive at Katoomba for views of the sand-stone formations called the Three Sisters. bluemts.com.au

HIMALAYAN VILLAGES, NEPAL

About 50 miles (80 km) southwest of Kathmandu, the Tribhuvan Highway reaches Daman with a superb panorama of the world's highest peaks—use the long-range telescopes in the viewing tower. To see traditional pagodas and woodcarvings, head west to Bandipur and Sirubari. Contact the tourist board for information about staying with village families.

velcomenepal.com CORFU, GREECE

From the island's capital, also called Corfu (Kérkyra), a coastal road travels north through the resort of Gouvia. Fork left to pass through Sgombou. Wind upward through the tranquil mountain villages of Skripero and Troumbeta. The road descends to the seaside village of Ropa on the edge of a fertile plain. From here, head east to quietly chic Agios Stefanos. Return south along the coast to Corfu Town.

greeka.com/ionian/corfu/index.htm

• FAIRY-TALE ROUTE, GERMANY

This route from Bremen in northwest Germany to Hanau, near Frankfurt, links more than 70 towns and villages associated with the Brothers Grimm fairy tales. Stop in Hamelin, famous for the Pied Piper. Romantic Trendelburg Castle, now a hotel, boasts a Rapunzel's Tower. The museum in Schwalmstadt has displays of regional costumes, including the outfit associated with Little Red Riding Hood. Finally, in Hanau, you come to the birthplace of the brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm.

germany-tourism.de

• LA GAUME, BELGIUM
Begin in the pink-roofed, hilltop village of Torgny. Head north through the pastoral Gaume region for the Abbey of Our Lady of Orval, best known for its Trappist beers. Farther north comes the scenic valley of the Semois River, where you drive through Mortehan to Bouillon, whose magnificent castle stands above a bend in the river.

HILLTOP VILLAGES, FRANCE

Gordes, Lacoste, Roussillon, Bonnieux, and Ménerbes are the best known of southern Provence's villages perchés (hilltop villages). In Roussillon, local stone gives the buildings a unique reddish hue. Castle remains, turrets, and towers are part of the view in each of the villages.

frenchriviera-tourism.com

• RING OF KERRY, IRELAND

From Killarney, head west along this loop route around the Iveragh Peninsula. At Caherciveen, turn off the N70 for Doulus Head. Return to the N70, then turn right to Valentia Island, with patchwork fields and needle-towered rocks. Loop past St. Finan's Bay and out to scenic Bolus Head. Take a pub break in Caherdaniel before heading back via Kenmare to Killarney.

ringofkerrytourism.com

• SETO INLAND SEA, JAPAN

In Japan's Seto Inland Sea, art has brought fame to 12 delightful islands and their villages, each a venue for the Setouchi Triennale Art Festival. Make your base on Naoshima, whose humorous pierhead pumpkin sculpture has become iconic. Visit its Chichu Art Museum and Lee Ufan Museum. Then take ferries to the other islands, including Teshima, with an art museum hidden among terraced rice fields, and Inujima, where an old copper refinery has been converted into a gallery. japan-guide.com/e/e5475.html

JADRANSKA MAGISTRALA, CROATIA

Lauded as Croatia's most scenic drive, the Jadranska Magistrala (Adriatic Road) snakes southeast more than 300 miles (480 km) along a rocky coast between Rijeka and Dubrovnik. Admire national parks, battered peaks, and peaceful medieval villages, and don't miss the most stunning section—running beneath Velebit Mountain, with a view of the island of Pag.

croatia.hr/en-GB

BERBER VILLAGES, TUNISIA

Hilltop forts and troglodyte homes carved into hillsides are hallmarks of traditional villages built by North Africa's indigenous Berber people. In central Tunisia, Takrouna and Kesra demand a climb up long flights of stairs, but reward with gorgeous views. Heading toward the Sahara are Matmata, Tamezret, and Toujane, whose troglodyte settings are famous from Star Wars. Farther south are Douiret, Chenini, and Ksar Ouled Soltane, with a fine fort (ksar). visatunisia.com/discover-tunisia-berber-cities

VILLAGE BYWAYS | 207





CHAPTER 6

URBAN EXCURSIONS

ities present special challenges for drivers. Few historic centers are car-friendly; many have created pedestrian-only zones within their mazes of narrow streets and hidden squares. The journeys on these pages show you how to do what the locals do—find the best routes (and best times) for exploration and reveal the particular delights of escaping for leisurely trips into the surrounding countryside. In Chicago, a cruise along Michigan $Avenue, which once \, ran \, alongside \, the \, lake \, of \, the \, same$ name, offers a chance to see many of the Windy City's $iconic\,s ky scrapers, including the\,John\,Hancock\,Build$ ing and the Tribune Tower. It also passes close to world-class galleries, museums, and high-end shops. A journey between three Texan cities-Houston, Beaumont, and Galveston—offers dazzling contrasts, from the Houston Space Center to world-class art museums, from oil barons' mansions to the birthplace of legendary rock diva Janis Joplin. Bedazzlement of another kind can be found on a seasonal trip through the rainbow-colored glories of Holland's tulip fields, set like necklaces around townscapes straight out of paintings by the Dutch Masters.

The multicolored lights of downtown Doha, Qatar, shine down on palm trees and reflect in the still waters of a pool at dusk.

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EAST FROM MONTRÉAL

Cross the St. Lawrence River on Montréal's Pont Champlain (Champlain Bridge) and head out into the beautiful and historic regions that lie southeast and east of the city: pastoral Montérégie and the picturesque, British-settled Eastern Townships.

eaving behind the sophisticated charms of Quebec's first city, follow the A-10 out into the open plains of Montérégie, famous for its cider apple orchards, maple groves, vineyards, and forests. About 11 miles (18 km) east of the Pont Champlain, take the exit for Chambly to visit Fort $Chambly \, National \, Historic \, Site, an \, 18th-century, French-built \, for tress \, in \, a \, superb \, position \, on \, the \, banks \,$ of the Richelieu River. Continue 25 miles (40 km) south through the Richelieu valley on Rte, 223, Just beyond the town of St.-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix, stop off for another fascinating historic site: the early 19 th-century, British-built Fort Lennox, on an island in the Richelieu River, which you reach by ferry.Back on Rte, 223, carry on south for 5 miles (8 km), then turn east onto Rte, 202. The road takes you through Quebec's rolling wine country, along the northernmost shores of Lake Champlain, and on to the village of Dunham, set on a forested plain with a backdrop of Appalachian peaks. Beyond Dunham, continue on Rtes. 104, 243, and 245 for about 40 minutes to Bolton Centre, where you turn onto local roads to Austin, then follow signs to the Abbaye de St.-Benoît-du-Lac. Spend some contemplative time in the grounds of the Benedictine monastery magnificently situated above Lac Memphrémagog, before heading northeast along the lovely Chemin Nicholas-Austin to Magog in the Eastern Townships $(Cantons\ de\ l'Est).\ Rte.\ 112\ leads\ to\ Sherbrooke,\ the\ graceful\ regional\ capital,\ built\ at\ the\ meeting\ point$ of the Magog and St.-François Rivers. North of Sherbrooke, Rte. 143 follows the course of the St.-François River to Drummondville and its Village Québécois d'Antan, a delightful open-air museum that re-creates life in a 19th-century Quebec village. Head back to Montréal along the A-20.

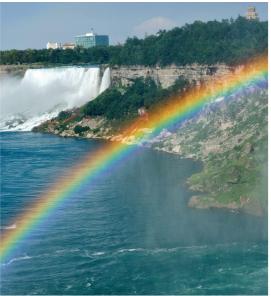
EXCURSION After Drummondville, you can continue along Rte. 143 to the northwest, where the land levels out and the air is grassy sweet. Odanak has a good museum dedicated to the culture of the Wabanaki (Abenaki) nation. Take Rte. 132 northeast, then cross the St. Lawrence to Trois-Rivières, Ouebec's second oldest city. The historic Rts. 133—Chemin du Roy (King's Way), opened in 1737—leads southwest beside breathtaking Las St.-Pierre. a lake in the St. Lawrence. At St.-Ignace-de-Loyola, a ferry takes you back across the river. Drive south along Rte. 133, which follows the Richelieu River. then back to Montfail on the A-20.



FROM: Loop route from Montréal, Canada ROADS: A-10, Rtes. 223, 202, 104, 243, 245, Chemin Nicholas-Austin, Rtes. 112, 143, A-20 DISTANCE: 268 miles (432 km) DRIVING TIME: 6.5 hours WHEN TO GO. Mid-May through October. Spring is good for the maple harvest, fall for the colors and the apple harvest. PLANNING: If you tire of driving, rent a boat to explore the numerous navigable rivers and lakes, quebecoriginal.com www.bonjourquebec.com

Fall colors add to the rural delights of a quiet road through the Eastern Townships.





A rainbow forms in the spray of Niagara Falls.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

A detour southwest of Port Dover takes you to Long Point Provincial Park on a wild, 20-mile (32 km) sandspit poking into Lake Erie. Long Point is home to turtles and many bird species. In spring and fall, it is a staging area for thousands of migratory songbirds and waterfowl.

on Maid of the Mist, one of four sturdy boats that have been ferrying visitors around the falls for 150 years.

Capital of Upper Canada in the 1790s, burned by the Americans in 1813, a summer resort at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.—Nlagara-on-the-Lake has been through many incarnations, most recently as home of the Shaw Festival (April through October), devoted to works by the playwright George Bernard Shaw and his contemporaries. The Shaw Festival Theatre company is one of North America's finest acting ensembles.

| CANADA |

TWO LAKES FROM TORONTO

An easy weekend loop route from Toronto includes shoreline highlights along two of the Great Lakes, Ontario and Erie, and the thundering splendor of Niagara Falls. Stroll along the boardwalk in Port Dover, then watch classic drama in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

rom downtown Toronto, head southwest along the shore of Lake Ontario on historic Hwy. 2, one of Ontario's King's Highways that follow the routes of old foot-trails and wagon roads. After $45\ \mathrm{miles}\ (72\ \mathrm{km})$, you reach Hamilton, the central town of the lake's Golden Horseshoe, its arcshaped southwestern fringe. Allow yourself time to explore Hamilton's pleasant downtown and visit the Royal Botanic Gardens, the Art Gallery (with a good collection of Canadian art), and Dundurn $Castle, a \ hand some 19 th-century \ mans ion \ that \ now \ houses \ a \ museum. \ After these \ urban \ delights, head$ across open countryside on Hwy. 6 to the harbor town and resort of Port Dover on the north shore of Lake Erie. From here, head east on Hwy. 3 past tobacco farms and rustic villages to Port Colborne and on to Fort Erie, where the Old Fort Erie is a restored British fortress. Standing on its ramparts and looking east across the Niagara River toward the U.S., you will understand the fort's strategic importance during the frontier's less peaceful days. Head north along Hwy. 116 into Niagara Falls—enjoy the city'sglitz, and of course don't miss views of the Horseshoe Falls, the spectacular cataract on the Canadian $\,$ side of the border. In the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake to the north, the British-built Fort George, completed in 1802, is the centerpiece of a historic district, which includes the site where the first parliament of Upper Canada met in 1792. You are now back on the shores of Lake Ontario. Head west on Hwy. 87 until you join the Queen Elizabeth Way, a freeway that whisks you across the Burlington Bay James N. Allan Skyway at the southwestern end of the lake and back to Toronto.

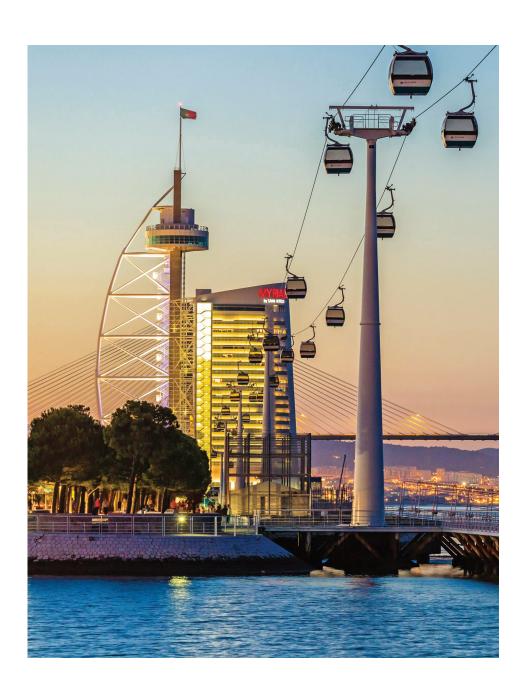
FROM: Loop route from Toronto, Canada

ROADS: Hwys. 2, 6, 3, 116, 87, Queen Elizabeth Way DISTANCE: 280 miles (450 km) DRIVING TIME: 7 hours

PLANNING: Port Dover is a good place to stop overnight. ontariotravel.net



URBAN EXCURSIONS | 211



1 TROIS-RIVIÈRES, CANADA

The 1.5-mile (2.4 km) circuit skirts the grounds of the Trois-Rivières' exhibition center near the St. Lawrence River. Start in Avenue Gilles-Villeneuve and drive counterclockwise. Head past the swimming pool under the massive concrete monument of Porte Duplessis, then up by the baseball stadium, before taking a 90-degree left down Rue Calonne. Navigate the sharpest of the circuit's 10 turns to head back to Avenue Gilles-Villeneuve and the finishing line.

PLANNING: Check to see if there are races, fairs, or other entertainments at the grounds.

2 ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

The current Grand Prix circuit in St. Petersburg takes in a length of landing strip at Albert Whitted Airport, so you'll have to go back to the original 1985 Trans-Am course, starting beside the Bayfront Arena parking lot. Head up Beach Drive Northeast to 5th Avenue Northeast, then back down past the pier on Bayshore Drive.

PLANNING: Start early, especially in peak season (December through April). gpstpete.com

3 MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY

By the beach in Montevideo, lively Parque Rodó has played host to Grand Prix contests and occasionally becomes the focus of a motor-racing circuit. Drive along the seaside ramblas (promenades) of the Punta Carretas neighborhood, with its golf course (look out for parrots in the trees), from Playa Ramírez to Playa Pocitas.

PLANNING: Punta Carretas has the best dining in Montevideo. welcomeuruguay.com

4 MONTE-CARLO, MONACO

Monte-Carlo seems to have been built for the roar of its springtime race, which dates back to 1922. At just over 2 miles (3 km), the slowest and toughest of the F1 Grand Prix circuits starts at the back of the harbor (two drivers have ended up in the drink), twists up and around the casino and Grand Hotel hairpin, then roars through a tunnel back to the harbor.

PLANNING: You might want to stay over the border in France, where prices are lower and parking is easier. *grand-prix-monaco.com*

10

CITY CIRCUITS

Follow in the wheel tracks of some of the world's greatest racing drivers in a selection of Grand Prix and other famous auto-racing street circuits.

5 MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

The medieval walls of Marrakech form the backdrop for a recently designed 2.8-mile (4.6 km) circuit, located five minutes from the medina (old city). Head up Avenue Mohammed VI, then navigate a hairpin bend onto Route de l'Ourika and loop back to the start. When you've finished, how about drinks at the world-famous Hotel La Mamounia?

PLANNING: The Grand Prix event takes place in April. *visitmarrakech.com*

6 SOCHI, RUSSIA

The mountain-backed resort of Sochi on Russia's Black Sea Riviera is the setting each year for the country's Formula One Grand Prix. Visit the state-of-the-art Autodrom, opened in 2014 in the city's Olympic Park, and take a spin around the 18 turns of the 3.7-mile (5.9 km) circuit. Do this either as the co-driver or take the wheel yourself for 20 minutes.

PLANNING: Book your session on the track in advance. experiences.sochiautodrom.ru/en

7 BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

Oil-rich Azerbaijan's Grand Prix takes place on an authentic street circuit through its capital, the ancient city of Baku. Start in Azadliq Square, loop around the grandiose Government House, then head west

OPPOSITE: The 1,400-foot (420 m) central span of the Vasco da Gama Bridge strides across the Tagus River in Portugal's capital, Lisbon. to the walled Old City. Circle this, admiring the 15th-century Palace of the Shirvanshahs and 12th-century Maiden Tower, then head back to Azadliq Square. You won't achieve any great speed, of course, in ordinary traffic conditions.

PLANNING: Winters are mild in Baku, so this is a year-round destination. azerbaijan.travel

8 MONZA, ITALY

Italy's Autodromo Nazionale stands in the grounds of the 18th-century Royal Villa of Monza, on the outskirts of the small northern city of Monza. Combine your visit to the circuit with a tour of the villa, built for Habsburg Archduke Ferdinand when he was Austrian governor of Milan. Monza city has lovely old squares and fine churches, notably its 14th-century cathedral. Make sure to drive across the Ponte del Leoni over the Lambro River.

PLANNING: The cathedral museum houses the Iron Crown of Lombardy, said to contain a nail used in the crucifixion of Christ. *turismo.monza.it/en*

9 LISBON, PORTUGAL

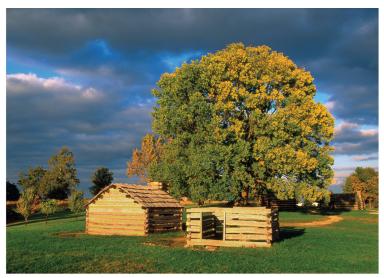
The Circuito do Estoril lies in the upscale coastal resort of Estoril, west of Lisbon. Start there, then head east for the Vasco da Gama Bridge, opened in 1998. Cross the Tagus estuary, then loop back to re-cross the Tagus on the older Ponte 25 de Abril suspension bridge. Follow the Nó, which hugs the coast of the so-called Sintra Riviera, back to Estoril.

PLANNING: Visit Sintra's Pena Palace, a fairy-tale castle. portugalvisitor.com/portugal-city-guides/estoril-cascais-guide

10 JEREZ DE LA FRONTERA, SPAIN

In Jerez, pay homage to both motoring and equestrian skills. After visiting the Circuito de Jerez, opened in 1985 north-east of the city, head back into town for the Royal Andalusian School of Equestrian Art, famous for the performances of its "dancing" horses. And, of course, in this home of the fortified wine, sherry, you must tour some of the sherry bodegas (wineries) and tabancos, sherry taverns.

PLANNING: You can visit the Royal School's museum any time during normal opening hours and alucia.com/cities/jerez/motor-racing.htm



 $Against \, a \, suitably \, dramatic \, background \, of \, heavy \, cloud, \, a \, shaft \, of \, sunlight \, illuminates \, some \, of \, the \, log \, shelters \, at \, Valley \, Forge.$

| PENNSYLVANIA |

PHILADELPHIA FREEDOM TRAIL

Memories of the Revolutionary War abound in this history-rich region. An easy day trip takes in the Liberty Bell, two battlefield sites, George Washington's Valley Forge encampment, and the magnificent Longwood Gardens.

tart in Philadelphia's Chestnut Lane, with its cluster of historic sites, including Independence Hall (where the Declaration of Independence was signed and the U.S. Constitution drafted), $Congress\,Hall, and\,the\,Liberty\,Bell\,Pavilion.\,Enter\,the\,chateau\,country\,of\,the\,Brandywine\,Valley\,Alley\,Liberty\,Bell\,Pavilion.\,Enter\,the\,Congress\,Hall,\,And\,the\,Liberty\,Bell\,Pavilion.\,Enter\,the\,Chateau\,Country\,Of\,the\,Brandywine\,Valley\,Bell\,Pavilion.\,Enter\,the\,Chateau\,Country\,Of\,the\,Brandywine\,Valley\,Bell\,Pavilion.\,Enter\,the\,Chateau\,Country\,Of\,the\,Brandywine\,Valley\,Bell\,Pavilion.\,Enter\,the\,Chateau\,Country\,Of\,the\,Brandywine\,Valley\,Bell\,Pavilion\,Delta\,Bell\,Pavilion$ as you head out of the city on Market Street and U.S. 1. Here, the mansions of the du Pont family stand amid a landscape of rolling pastures, woods, and streams. Near Chadds Ford, Brandywine Battlefield State Park contains the farmhouses that served as headquarters for George Washington and his French ally, the Marquis de Lafayette, during the Battle of Brandywine in September 1777. Continue west to Longwood Gardens, the life's work of Pierre du Pont, who died in 1954. This is a glorious chance to relax as you wander through more than 1,000 acres (405 ha) of outdoor gardens or admire the 20 indoor gardens. Wind northeast along Pa. 52 to the elegant town of West Chester. From here, U.S. 202/422 and Valley Forge Road bring you to the primitive log shelters used by George Washington's $Continental\ Army.\ Valley\ Forge\ National\ Historical\ Park\ encompasses\ 3,500\ acres\ (1,416\ ha),$ including the encampment where Washington and his army spent the bitter winter months of 1777–78 after their defeat at Brandywine and stalemate at Germantown. Don't miss the $Valley \, Forge \, Historical \, Society \, Museum, \, located \, inside \, the \, park's \, Washington \, Memorial \,$ Chapel. From Valley Forge, pick up I-76/476 and the Germantown Pike until you reach Germantown Avenue, which runs through the once fashionable enclave of Germantown, also the site of the October 1777 battle. For a clearer picture of the engagement, visit ${\bf Cliveden, a\ mansion\ fortified\ by\ the\ British\ against\ American\ bullets.\ Continue\ south\ along}$ Germantown Avenue into downtown Philadelphia.

FROM: Loop route from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania ROADS: U.S. 1, Pa. 52, U.S. 202, 422, Valley Forge Road, 1-76, 1-476, Germantown Pike, Germantown Avenue DISTANCE: 95 miles (153 km) DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Check opening times—many sites are closed on Mondays. visitphilly.com



I TEXAS I

OUT FROM HOUSTON

Head from Texas's biggest city—rich, rowdy, and sprawling—on a loop route that shows off wildlife reserves, historic sites, and NASA's Space Center Houston. Stretch your legs and explore Big Thicket National Preserve or Galveston's elegant mansions.

fter absorbing Houston's many attractions (see In Focus), take I-45 north to Huntsville. A memorial museum on the campus of Sam Houston State University has several attractions related to Sam Houston, one of the heroes of Texas history, who drove Santa Anna and the Mexicans out of Texas in 1836. After Huntsville, follow U.S. 190 east to the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation, where tribe members guide you through natural woodland, perform traditional dances, and demonstrate tribal crafts. To reach Big Thicket National Preserve Visitor Center, one of Texas's $most\ ecologically\ diverse\ areas\ with\ pines,\ savanna,\ and\ swampy\ woods,\ continue\ east,\ then\ south\ on$ U.S. 69/287. Another 30 miles (48 km) south, the city of Beaumont stands at the apex of the Golden Triangle, transformed by the discovery of "black gold" (oil) there in 1901. Beaumont's McFaddin-Ward House leaves you in no doubt of the riches acquired during that time. Follow U.S. 287 to Port Arthur, $birthplace of U.S.\ music icon\ Janis\ Joplin, then\ Tex.\ 73/124\ to\ High\ Island.\ Anahuac\ National\ Wildlife$ Refuge—reached via a short side trip—is 33,000 acres (13,355 ha) of marsh and ponds populated by alligators, wading birds, and waterfowl. High Island is famous for its woodlands, which attract small birds crossing the Gulf of Mexico northward during spring migration. From here, head west on Tex. 87 to Port Bolivar and ride the ferry to Galveston Island, a busy 19th-century port until devastated by a $hurricane\ in\ 1900.\ Explore\ its\ historic\ legacy\ at\ sites\ such\ as\ the\ Texas\ Seaport\ Museum,\ the\ Railroad$ Museum, and the turn-of-the-century architectural splendors of Moody Mansion and Bishop's Palace. From here, take I-45 back to Houston, with a break south of the city at Space Center Houston, whose exhibits include the Apollo 17 command module.

IN FOCUS I Houston's attractions are numerous. For art lovers, the most outstanding is the Rothko Chapel, where 4 huge paintings by Mark Rothko combine with natural lighting in an octagonal interior to create an aura of contemplation. Also notable are the Menil Collection of at and antiquities and the Museum of Fine Art Houston. The Museum of Phatural Science offers the walk-through Cockrell Butterfly Center, with hundreds of brilliant species fifting through the greenery.



FROM: Loop route from Houston, Texas ROADS: 142, U.S. 190, 69, 287, Tex. 73, 124, 87 DISTANCE: 413 miles (665 km) DRIVING TIME: 8.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round, though summer humidity is intense PLANNING: Houston has a lively performing arts scene, with resident opera and ballet companies.

Shocking-pink roseate spoonbills nest in trees but feed in shallow water, and the refuge at Anahuac suits their needs perfectly.



ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

I ILLINOIS I

CHICAGO'S MICHIGAN AVENUE

 $Big, bold, and \, brash-and \, flanked \, by \, architectural \, landmarks-few \, streets$ $person if y their host city\ like\ Chicago's\ Michigan\ Avenue.\ It\ doubles\ as\ a\ drive-like\ Chicago's\ Michigan\ Avenue.$ $through\ of\ Windy\ City\ history, from\ rugged\ frontier\ days\ to\ gleaming\ metropolis.$



Oak Street Beach, lapped by the waters of Lake Michigan, is popular with Chicagoans in summer.

t's hard to believe today, but Chicago's celebrated Michigan Avenue derives its name from the fact that it ran along the shore of Lake Michigan when it was first laid out in the early 1800s. Debris from the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 was used as landfill to push the lakeshore a quarter mile (0.4 km) east of the avenue. By the 1890s the boulevard was ground zero for the skyscraper revolution.

The only place Michigan Avenue reaches the lakeshore today is its northernmost end near Oak Street Beach in Chicago's historic Gold Coast neighborhood. But to get a feel of the city's love affair with Lake Michigan, start your drive 6.5 miles (10 km) to the north at Kathy Osterman Beach,

a stretch of Lake Shore Drive that runs through Lincoln Park with its famous zoo before intersecting with Michigan Aven

the stretch of Michigan Avenue between the lakeshore and the Chicago River is renowned for its high-end shops and gourmet eateries. Just three blocks down from the lake, the sleek black John Hancock Building (see Highlights) reaches 100 stories into the Illinois sky. It opened in 1968 as the world's second tallest building. Its Chicago 360 Observation Deck hovers 1,000 feet (304 m) above Michigan Avenue.

Another block down the avenue, the

a symbol of Chicago's resurgence after the blaze. Nowadays it's listed on the National Often called the Magnificent Mile, Register of Historic Places and houses the City Gallery, a showcase for local art and photography. The nearby Chicago Sports

> Place next to Macy's Department Store. Famous names like Neiman-Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, and Brooks Brothers dominate Michigan Avenue between the Water Tower and Grand Avenue. But the three blocks before the river showcase classic American architecture: the flamboyant InterContinental Magnificent Mile hotel, opened in 1929 (see Highlights), the neo-Gothic Tribune Tower (1925), and the neo-Renaissance Wrigley

that survived the famous fire and remains

Museum is on the 7th level of Water Tower

MICHIGAN AVENUE IS CHICAGO'S MOST CELEBRATED STREET AND A REFLECTION OF HOW THE UNITED STATES EXPLODED INTO AN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL **POWERHOUSE FUELED** BY THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION. -JOE YOGERST Travel writer and photographer

Crossing the Chicago River on the DuSable Bridge, you can detour onto the Chicago Riverwalk or hop aboard a guided river cruise. Two blocks farther south, the American Writers' Museum (above CitiBank)

stone Water Tower is one of the few buildings Building (completed in 1924). SKATING THROUGH CHICAGO'S "BACK YARD" | An innovative park-within-a-park, Maggie Daley Park is one of the latest additions to Grant Park. Sprawling across 25 acres (10 ha) and with a backdrop of skyscrapers, the recreation space offers outdoor rock-climbing walls, tennis courts, a

a backtorp of systrapers, the recreation space riens outcome from the ministure golf course, and a unique Stating Ribbon, which transforms from smooth summer roller skating to frozen winter ice skating. The park's Play Garden features six different theme areas for children: The Enchanted Forest, The Watering Hole, Wave Lawn, The Harbor, The Sea, and The Slide Crater. The park's Fieldhouse offers fitness classes and skate rental.

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Definitely not for the faint-hearted: the TILT installation in Chicago's John Hancock Building.

honors a wide variety of wordsmiths from Mark Twain and Ernest Hemingway to Prince and Tupac Shakur.

Below Randolph Street, Michigan Avenue statist is long and lively interface with Grant Park. The huge green space was founded in 1839 with a mandate "forever to remain vacant of buildings." While it hasn't quite lived up to that pledge, the structures that grace the park today are national treasures. The huge Cloud Gate sculpture is Chicago's No. 1 selfie spot, while the futurist: Lay Pritzber Pavillion provides an outdoor epicenter for symphony and rock concerts. But the park's most treasured landmark is the Art Institute of Chicago (see Highlights), one of the globe's great art museums, known for its impressionist and American collections.

The Pritzker Military Museum & Library at the corner of Monroe and Michigan is renowned for its Winston Churchill artifacts and a vast collection of American wartime memorabilia. A block farther south, Route 66 starts its legendary journey to the West Coast at Adams and Michigan. The drive comes to a dramatic end at Michigan and Roosevelt with an installation of more than 100 larger-than-life headless and armless iron sculptures by the late Polish artist Magdalena Abakanowicz. A mile south of Grant Park, the revitalized Motor Row District has morphed from car dealerships into hip restaurants and music joints.

FROM: Kathy Osterman Beach, Chicago
TO: South Michigan Avenue and
Roosevelt Road, Chicago
ROADS: North Lake Shore Drive, Michigan

DISTANCE: 8.5 miles (13.7 km)
DRIVING TIME: 35 minutes
WHEN TO 60: Year-round
PLANNING: Michigan Avenue is
renowned for its holiday decorations,
a festive season that kicks off with the
Magnificent Mile Lights Festival in midNovember. Aboosechicago.com

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Perched on the 94th floor of the **John Hancock Building**, a new thrill ride called the TILT dangles riders over the building's edge 1,030 feet (314 m) above Michigan Avenue.

More like a palace than a hotel, the InterContinental Magnificent Mile features a 14th-floor indoor pool where cinematic Tarzan Johnny Weissmuller once trained.

Among the keystone works at the **Art Institute**of Chicago are American Gothic by Grant Wood

URBAN EXCURSIONS | 217

PANAMA CITY TO AZUERO

Relish the old colonial towns and villages and striking landscapes of Panama's Azuero Peninsula. Step back in time as you share the road with ox-drawn carts and encounter artisans pursuing traditional crafts, from pottery to special five-stringed guitars.

rom Panama City's fabled Puente de Las Américas (Bridge of the Americas), follow the Pan-American Highway west for 3.5 hours until you reach the town of Divisa. Turn south onto the Carretera Nacional (National Highway), which takes you into the Azuero Peninsula. After the $town of \ Parita's \ quaint \ colonial \ streets \ and \ historic \ church, you \ reach \ La \ Arena, \ a \ village \ famous \ for \ its$ ceramic workshops. Pause for a while to explore its artisan stores, where the pottery ranges from reproductions of pre-Columbian images to wind chimes and vases. Farther south, the Carretera enters the $city of Chitr\'e, where \, modern \, commercial is m \, surrounds \, a \, colonial \, center \, with \, whitewashed \, churches.$ From here, continue to Los Santos. The town of "the saints" is close to the hearts of Panamanians, as the grito de la Villa de Los Santos ("shout of the town of Los Santos")—the first public call for independence from Spain—emanated from here in November 1821. The town's compact main square, Plaza $Sim \acute{o}n \, Bol\'{e}var, is \, dominated \, by \, the \, Iglesia \, de \, San \, Atanasio, \, with \, a \, simple \, wooden \, interior \, and \, a \, baroque$ gilt altar. Farther on, Guararé is known for producing five-stringed guitars called $\it mejoranas$. Continue to the city of Las Tablas, famous for polleras, the gathered skirts and tops that are a national costume for Panamanian women. From here to the sleepy town of Pedasí, you pass through an increasingly $remote \ landscape, where \ the \ only \ other \ vehicles \ on \ the \ road \ are \ likely \ to \ be \ creaky \ ox-drawn \ carts. \ To$ make a loop back to Las Tablas, continue west from Pedasí and follow the southern shore of the Azuero Peninsula to El Cacao, then turn north to Las Tablas. The last section of road winds upward through mountain scenery, with magnificent views of the coastal plains and Pacific Ocean.

I EXCURSION I Reached by turning left off the Carretera Nacional 14 miles (23 km) south of Divisa, the 20,000 acres (8100 ha) of Sarigua National Park combine a sculpted aird environment—in stark contrast to the backdrop of buth afreen mountains—with salty lagoons and mangroves along the Pacific shore. More than 160 bird species flock to the lagoons and mangroves. You may also see armadillos. For sweeping views of the park, head for the mirador at its ranger station.



FROM: Panama City, Panama
To: Pedasi, Panama
To: Pedasi, Panama
ROADS: Pan-American Highway,
Carretera Nacional, minor roads
DRIVING: About 250 miles
(400 km)
DRIVING TIME: 5 to 6 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Pack your swimsuit.
There are a number of good
swimming and surfing beaches
near Pedasi, panamainfo.com

 $In Sarigua\ National\ Park, a \ lone\ tree\ stump\ stands\ erect\ in\ a\ landscape\ of\ rocks, wind-tossed\ sand, and\ deeply\ eroded\ gullies\ sand,\ gand\ gan$





PASEO DE LA REFORMA

The short drive along Mexico City's elegant principal thoroughfare offers a fascinating insight into the country's multicultural character, which dates back centuries: from the $Aztec\ and\ Spanish\ colonialism\ to\ French\ occupation\ and\ contemporary\ Mexican\ culture.$

uilt in the reign of the Emperor Maximilian during the French occupation of Mexico in the 1860s, the Paseo de la Reforma, originally modeled on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, slices northwestsoutheast through the capital. Start in the Zócalo, the huge square that marks the city's ceremonial center, where Diego Rivera murals adorn the walls of the National Palace (seat of Mexico's government). From here, Avenidas Francisco I Madero and Juárez lead to the Paseo. Turn southwest and reach the first of the *glorietas* (traffic roundabouts) that occur every third block. This one, at the corner with Morelos, has a monument to Christopher Columbus. Watch out for the monument to Cuauhtemoc, the last Aztec emperor, at the corner with Insurgentes, and the golden Angel of the $Revolution\ at\ the\ corner\ with\ Florencia.\ Rising\ ahead\ of\ you\ are\ the\ city's\ tallest\ skys crapers,$ Torre Mayor, Torre Bancover, and Torre Reforma. The curved glass facade of the first contrasts with the angularity of Reforma, which has taken the crown as tallest. Both are architectural icons. Beyond that, the Paseo enters Chapultepec Park (see Unexpected Pleasure), which spreads out around a hill topped by the neoclassical Chapultepec Castle. This one-time home of the Emperor Maximilian now houses the National Museum of History.

UNEXPECTED PLEASURE Chapultapec Park has superb outdoor sculptures and three of Mexico City's most fascinating museums: the Modern Art Museum, the Ruffino Tamayo Museum, and the National Anthropology Museum. There are also lakes with paddle boats, an old-style wooden roller coaste and a zoo.

FROM: The Zócalo, Mexico City, Mexico

To: Chapultepec Park, Mexico City, Mexico ROADS: Avenidas Francisco I Madero and Juárez, Paseo de la Reforma

DISTANCE: 4 miles (6 km)
DRIVING TIME: 30 minutes WHEN TO GO: Anytime except Sundays, when the Paseo becomes a pedestrian walkway. PLANNING: Ideally, hire someone else to drive—this will allow you to enjoy the sights. mexicocity.com.mx



URBAN EXCURSIONS | 219



Lush green vegetation frames a view of Iguazú Falls from the Argentinian side of the gorge.

ARGENTINA I

HEADING TO IGUAZÚ FALLS

Skirting the borders of Uruguay and Paraguay, this epic drive climbs from Buenos Aires into Argentina's far northeast, swapping the epitome of urbanity for "outback" scenery en route to Iguazú Falls, a natural wonder that is taller than Niagara Falls and twice as wide.

 $eave the intoxicating \, sprawl \, of \, Buenos \, Aires \, behind \, as \, you \, take \, the \, three-lane \, Avenida \, General \, and \, an extension \, and \, and \, an extension \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, an extension \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, an extension \, and \, an extension \, an extens$ Paz and head northwest out of the city on R.N.-9. At Zárate, turn north on R.N.-12 across the wide delta of the Paraná River. You have now entered the province of Entre Ríos, a fertile "island" region wedged between the Paraná to the west and the Uruguay River to the east. At Ceibas, take~R.N.-14~to~the~city~of~Gualeguay ch'u,~renowned~for~its~annual~carnival—those~in~the~know~prefer~defined and the comparison of theit to Rio's bigger bash. For the next 260 miles (420 km), the road runs through lush, wild landscape alongside the Uruguay River, which marks the border first with Uruguay, then with Brazil. Shortly after crossing from Entre Ríos into Corrientes province, follow R.N.-14 east at the junction with R.N.-119 and 127. A little more than 50 miles (80 km) beyond that, take care where a spur of R.N.-14 bears right toward the Brazilian city of Uruguaiana: Keep left on the northerly branch. After another 124 $\,$ miles (200 km), R.N.-14 finally parts company with the Uruguay River to push more directly northward. You now have the vast Esteros del Iberá (Iberá Wetlands) spreading out for more than 4,000 square miles (10,360 $\,\text{km}^2\!$) to your west, while the terrain around you becomes more hilly. Near San José, shortly after entering the province of Misiones, turn left onto R.N.-105 toward the city of Posadas, standing by the Paraná River on the border with Paraguay. A few miles before Posadas, turn northeast near Villalonga onto R.N.-12. This is the road that leads to your ultimate goal, following the curve of the Paraná and taking you into mountainous scenery for the first time. On the Brazilian border, you cross the Iguazú River—a tributary that joins the Paraná here—on the Puente de la Fraternidad (Fraternity Bridge), a fittingly dramatic end to an epic trip. Take a day or two to rest and see some of the 275 cascades that make up the falls.

FROM: Buenos Aires, Argentina To: Puerto Iguazú, Argentina Roads: R.N.-9, 12, 14, 105, 12 DISTANCE: 805 miles (1,295 km) DRIVING TIME: 16 hours WHEN TO GO: October through March
PLANNING: All Rutas Nacionales

PLANNING: All Rutas Nacionales (R.N.) are toll roads, so keep small change handy. argentina.travel



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BRAZIL I

RIO TO ITATIAIA NATIONAL PARK

The pulsing urban beat and pounding surf of Rio de Janeiro seem much farther away than a three-hour drive, along which you'll pass coffee plantations and a Finnish town before reaching Itatiaia National Park.

his is a journey of extremes. Joining the Via Dutra expressway (B.R.-116) from Avenida Brasil in the port district of downtown Rio, you behold a

portrait of urban grit that few tourists experience. These neighborhoods of drab concrete and bleak tenements—in which the majority of Rio's working class lives—are in sharp contrast to the picture sque hillside homes of the city's affluent $% \left(1\right) =\left(1$ seaside communities of Copacabana and Ipanema. As you depart metropolitan Rio, the urban corridor gradually gives way to rural stretches of small farms where residents hand-cultivate bananas, manioc, and other produce in much the same way as their colonial $predecessors. \ This portion of \ Via \ Dutra\ passes\ by\ rolling\ hillsides, provincial\ towns, and\ the\ occasional$ remnants of coffee plantations-reminders of a bygone era when slave labor here produced threequarters of the world's coffee supply. Just past the town of Resende is Penedo, Brazil's only Finnish colony. Head north on R.J.-163 and then east for a short distance on Rua Ribeirão das Pedras to visit $Pequena\ Finland \hat{a}ndia, or\ "Little\ Finland,"\ a\ small\ community\ of\ artisan\ shops,\ restaurants,\ and\ well-defined and the property of\ artisan\ shops,\ restaurants,\ and\ well-defined and\ restaurants.$ kept streets that offers a glimpse of Finnish life as it existed during the community's hevday in the 1930s. Here, you can observe weavers at work on their looms, tour a chocolate factory, and take one of the many nature trails outside of the village. Next stop is Itatiaia National Park, founded in 1937 and home to an incredible range of plants and animals. Back on Via Dutra, turn off for the upper park at Km 330, or wait until Km 316 and visit the lower park (see Stav a While).

STAY A WHILE I Itataia National Park offers diverse landscapes. The lower park has a wide array of tropical flora and fauna as well as hikes along verdant trails with numerous waterfalls, while the upper park, or planalto, offers stunning vistas of rugged peaks and tropical hillsides. In the upper park, venture along the dirt road that leads steadily upward to Abrigo Rebousea, a shelter on the slopes of Pico das Agulhas Negras, the country's fifth highest peak, 9,157 feet (2,791 m) above sea level.

FROM: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil To: Itatiaia National Park, Brazil ROAD: B.R.-116/Via Dutra, R.J.-163. Rua Ribeirão das Pedras. local roads

DISTANCE: 155 miles (250 km) **DRIVING TIME: 3 hours**

WHEN: May through September PLANNING: The upper park can be cold during winter (June through August); its trails are for experienced trekkers only. visitbrasil.com

 $In \ Penedo-a \ handy \ base for touring \ Itatia ia \ National \ Park-Finnish \ immigrants \ make \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ base \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ Brazil \ their \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ brazil \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ brazil \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ brazil \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ of \ brazil \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ own \ and \ a \ a \ corner \ own \ a \ corner \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ own \ a \ corner \ own \ and \ a \ corner \ own \ a \ corner \ own \ and \ a \ corner$







1 CUBAN BEATS—SANTIAGO DE CUBA, CUBA

The Casa de la Trova in Santiago de Cuba's Calle Heredia district is perhaps the country's most famous music venue, with regular live shows of Cuba's creolized mix of African and European sounds. Then head north to Casa de las Tradiciones for some real authentic Cuban beats,

PLANNING: The best time to visit the city is July, during its carnival, cuba-junky.com

2 CLASSICAL TOUR-VIENNA TO SALZBURG VIA LINZ, AUSTRIA

Beethoven and Mozart, among others, wrote, performed, and lived in these proud musical cities. Start with Vienna's Theatre an der Wien, where Beethoven premiered many of his works, and take in a concert at the State Opera House. Head west to Linz, where the Brucknerhaus holds performances most evenings. Continue west to Salzburg, which has Mozart's birthplace and home.

PLANNING: To ensure seeing the famous Vienna Philharmonic, be sure to make reservations at least six months in advance. wien.info, visit-salzburg.net

3 OPERA TOUR-PARMA TO CREMONA, ITALY

From Monteverdi to Verdi, northern Italy was home to some giants of opera. In Parma, visit the home of Verdi and the Museum of Opera before watching a performance in the famous Teatro Reggio. Head northwest to Cremona, home of Stradivarius, and visit the Stradivari Museum to see the artisan's tools and learn about the art of violin making.

PLANNING: Book concerts in Parma early.

4 IRISH FOLK TOUR, IRELAND

Watching a fiddle-player in an Irish country pub is even more enjoyable than drinking the Guinness. From Donegal's Leo's Tavern, the starting point for folk stars such as Enya and Clannad, head south to the Coleman Traditional Irish Music Centre, which often has big-name acts. Then drive west to Matt Molloy's Bar in Westport. Farther south, County Clare has many small country pubs with regular music nights.

10

THE TOP

MUSIC DRIVES

The world is blessed with many different rhythms and sounds that make you dance and smile. Here's our pick of the world's top music drives.

PLANNING: County Clare's Corofin Music Festival is held in March. discoverireland.com

5 FADO MUSIC-LISBON TO COIMBRA, PORTUGAL

Fado, music with a lonesome voice and acoustic guitar, is known as the soul of Portugal. The most popular version, Lisbon fado, is best found in the Alfama and Mouraria districts of the city. A more refined version of fado is from the university town of Coimbra, where Bar à Capella hosts many top local acts.

PLANNING: Fado music is often played in restau-

6 KENTUCKY MUSIC TRAIL, KENTUCKY

Loretta Lynn, Billy Ray Cyrus, Hylo Brown, and Crystal Gale are just some of the great names of Country music associated with the Kentucky section of Highway 23. In Paintsville, don't miss the U.S. 23 Country Music Highway Museum. In Butcher Holow, turn down a gravel road to see the log cabin where Loretta Lynn was born.

PLANNING: Summer and fall are best.

7 AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC

TRAILS, NORTH CAROLINA

The tobacco country of eastern North Carolina gave the world the jazz great,

OPPOSITE: Visit Cuba's second city, Santiago de Cuba, for its heady mix of live African and European beats. Thelonious Monk, the brothers Maceo and Melvin Parker of the James Brown Band, and other African American stars of jazz, gospel, soul, R&B, and funk. Begin your exploration in Thelonious Monk's birthplace. Rocky Mount.

PLANNING: African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina by Sarah Bryan, Beverly Patterson, and Michelle Lanier will help you plan your trip. nearts.org/comehearnc

8 BRAZILIAN MUSIC, OLINDA TO SALVADOR, BRAZIL

A 600-mile (966 km) drive down Brazilfs northeastern coastline combines relaxation and musical delight. Start in the beautiful colonial city of Olinda, then make your way south through Porto de Galinhas, São Miguel dos Milagres, Penedo, and Mangue Seco. Finish on a musical high in Salvador, Brazilfs unquestioned music capital, its streets and bars abuzz with samba, local genres forró and axé, Latin jazz, Brazillain reggae, and the hypnotic beat of massed street bands, or blocos.

PLANNING: Check out Salvador's Curuzu/Liberdade and Atlantic-facing Rio Vermelho districts.

9 GAMELAN MUSIC, BALI, INDONESIA

Standing on a cliff top, the Uluwatu Sea Temple in Ball's southern tourist zone provides a dramatic setting for nightly performances of gamelan music and traditional dancing. To deepen the experience, drive inland to the cultural capital, Ubud, where you will hear the distinctive percussive beats of gamelan all around you.

PLANNING: Performances are held at the Taman Saraswati Temple from 7:30 p.m. balitourismboard.org

10 SOUNDS OF SENEGAL, DAKAR TO ST. LOUIS, SENEGAL

Dakar has a buzzing music scene, including traditional local music and the Senegalese pop genre, mbalax. Nlightly performances take place at mbalax legend Youssou N'Dour's Le Thiossane club. For a change, head up the coast to St. Louis, which hosts an international jazz festival each Max.

PLANNING: November through May are the best months. dakar-travels.com/dakar-guide



I UNITED ARAB EMIRATES I

CRUISING INTO THE FUTURE

In little more than 40 years, Dubai and Abu Dhabi have evolved from sleepy Arabian seaports into two of the globe's most advanced cities, connected by a highway that can lull drivers into thinking they are cruising through the future rather than present-day planet Earth.



Dubai Aquarium is one of the star attractions of Dubai Mall, the largest in the world.

o get the full effect of how the Emirates have changed, start this road trip in Dubai's old town, where the Gold Souk, spice market, and ancient dhow sailing craft offer a glimpse of what the United Arab Emirates was like before oil fueled a building boom. Follow busy Baniyas Road along Dubai Creek and merge onto the westbound Ell expressway headed for Abu Dhabi. Crossing Al Garhoud Bridge feels like time-tripping into the future, because suddenly you're driving through modern Dubai with its record-setting skyscrapers and other cutting-edge buildings. Among the many eye-catching structures are the twin Emirates Towers, the Big Ben-inspired Al Yaqoub, and then ew Museum of the Future, an eccentric torus-shaped building with a huge elliptical void in the middle.

Slide off the highway at exit 50B and ride the high-speed elevator to viewing decks at the summit of the Burj Khalifa (see Highlights), the world's tallest building (2,722 feet/829.8 m)—nearly twice as high as the Empire State Building, Farther south are the immense Mall of the Emirates, with its indoor skiing and snowboarding slope, and the Palm Jumeirah (see Highlights), an artificial archipelago with beach resorts, posh apartments, and the Atlantis Aquaventure waterpark.

Heading into the desert, the EII eventually crosses the border into Abu Dhabi, capital of the UAE and another city bent on inventing the future rather than dwelling in the past. Reaching the suburbs, merge onto the EIO expressway and head for Yas Island. Devoted to entertainment and sports, the artificial isle revolves around the Yas Marina auto-racing circuit (hosting the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix).

The EIO continues into the heart of Abu Dhabi, a mosaic of islands surrounded by creeks, canals, and mangrove swamp reserves. The city's architectural masterpiece is the immense Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque (see Highlights) with its 82 domes, soaring minarets, and reflective pools. Another modern stunner is the Louvre Abu Dhabi. Unveiled in 2017, the Middle Eastern branch of the famous Parisian museum tells the story of humanity via 12 galleries. End the drive with a sunset stroll along the Corniche waterfront, the glimmering skyscrapers of downtown Abu Dhabi reflected in the Persian Gulf.

OPPOSITE: For breathtaking views over the sprawling city and the desert beyond, a high-speed escalator whisks visitors up to the 148th story of Dubai's Burj Khalifa.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Burj Khalifa anchors an arts and entertainment complex that includes the musical Dubai Fountain, Dubai Opera House, and Dubai Aquarium & Underwater Zoo.

With more than three dozen beach resorts, **Palm Jumeirah** and the adjacent Dubai Marina offer a convenient place to break the drive into two or more days.

Unlike many mosques, **Sheikh Zayed Grand** is open to people of any faith.
Visitors can explore the vast structure on a guided cultural tour or using an audio-assisted e-quide.

In addition to copious art, the **Louvre Abu Dhabi** offers a year-round slate of film screenings, performing arts, and lectures.

FROM: Dubai, United Arab Emirates To: Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

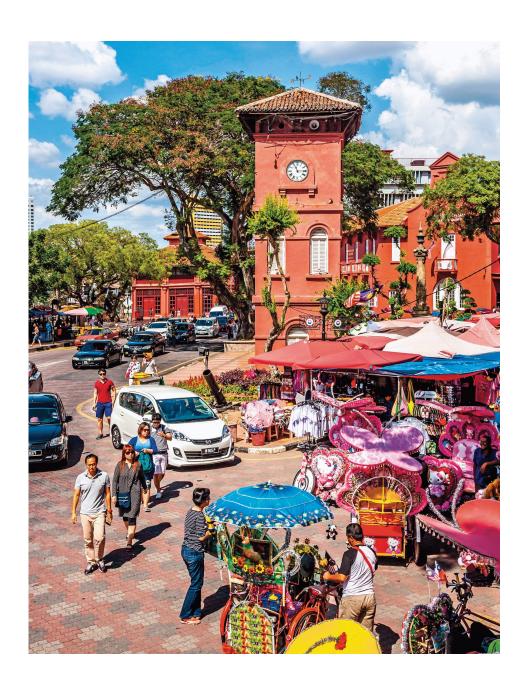
ROADS: E11 and E10 expressways DISTANCE: 93 miles (150 km)

DRIVING TIME: 1.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: September
through May

PLANNING: Avoid driving the route and visiting the UAE in summer, when temperatures often exceed 100°F (38°C). visitdubai.com/en and visitabudhabi.ae



URBAN EXCURSIONS | 225



I MALAYSIA | SINGAPORE |

THE OLD ROAD TO SINGAPORE

Although the journey along Route 5 between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore takes more than twice as long as its modern equivalent, the drive offers a glimpse of bygone Malaysia, a mosaic of fishing villages, palm groves, and beaches along the fabled Strait of Malacca.



Route 5 passes through Klang, where traditional wooden fishing boats are now fitted with motors

onstruction of Malaysia's Route 5 started in 1887—when ox carts and horse carriages were still the main form of wheeled transport—and continued through 1939. It was the main route between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore until the 1990s, when the North-South Expressway was completed. The new highway is much faster, but Route 5 endures as the scenic old road to Singapore. Starting out from central Kuala Lumpur, cruise the Federal Highway (Route 2) to Klang—Malaysia's biggest seaport—and transition onto southbound Route 5 headed for Banting, After crossing the Klang River into the old town, Route 5 passes through the lively Little India district. Look out on the right for the green-domed India Klang Mosque and the whitewashed Church of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Around 12 miles (19 Km) south of Klang is a turnoff for Carey Island (see Highlights) and its indigenous inhabitants, called the "Masked Men of Malaysia" because of their intricate wooden masks. Route 5 finally reaches the sea at Morib, with its broad beach, waterfront promenade, and seafood restaurants. The drive along Malaysia's Gold Coast continues to Port Dickson. Although the town is primarily known as a seaside retreat—including 11 miles (18 km) of continuous beach between Tanjung Gemuk and Tanjung Tuan—there's also quite a bit of history. Local landmarks include the 16th-century Portuguese lighthouse at Cape Rachado, the remains of Lukut Fort, and the Malaysian Military Museum.

Another 90 minutes down the coast is Malacca (see Highlights), one of Southeast Asia's most intriguing small cities. Founded in the early 15th century, Malacca went through waves of Portuguese, Dutch, and British colonial rule as well as Chinese and Indian immigration, making it one of the region's most ethnically and architecturally diverse urban areas. Much of the old town is meticulously restored, including landmark structures such as bright red Christ Church and Cheng Hoon Teng Temple.

Farther south, the old town in Batu Pahat offers its own collection of vintage buildings, including an art deco-style mosque, as well as Glutton's Corner (Jalan Pengkai), renowned for its food stalls. Reaching Pontian Kechil, Route 5 turns inland to Johor Bahru. Drive south onto Singapore Island, then follow the BKE, PJE, and Nicoll highways to the iconic Merlion statue by the Singapore River.

OPPOSITE: A terracotta-red tower overlooks Dutch Square, Malacca, a pick-up point for colorful trishaws.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Mah Meri Cultural Village on **Carey** Island showcases the handicrafts, performing arts, and other traditions of the Mah Meri people, one of the peninsula's 18 Orang Asli tribes.

In addition to its famous lighthouse, **Cape Rachado** is home to a nature reserve with forest trails and a sandy strand called the Blue Lagoon, with kayak rental and beachfront restaurants

Malacca's historic Jonker Street (Jalan Hang Jebat) is flanked by restored 17th-century shop-houses, now occupied by restaurants, coffee shops, antique stores, and art galleries.

FROM: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia To: Singapore ROADS: Route 5, Route 2, Route E3 DISTANCE: 305 miles (490 km) DRIVING TIME: 10 hours WHEN TO GO: Anytime PLANNING: Although the climate is always tropical (hot and humid), September and October are the height of the rainy season along the Malay Peninsula's west coast. malaysia.travel



URBAN EXCURSIONS | 227



One of India's ubiquitous yellow taxis flashes past the elaborately decorated white-stucco facade of a Raj-era mansion block.

INDIA

OH KOLKATA!

Feel the pulse of Bengal's rich culture, past and present, on this drive through the decaying grandeur of a once-great colonial city. You'll pass some of the public buildings, churches, monuments, and houses built in Kolkata's prime in the 18th and 19th centuries.

ise with the sun and see dawn break at Babu's Ghat on the Hooghly River. Look across the Maidan (the open space in front of the 18th-century Fort William) to Jawaharlal Nehru Road and you (the open space in front of the 18th-century Fort William) to Jawaharlal Nehru Road and you (dating from 1813) and the grandiose Raj Bhavan (Government House), then pass the Oberoi Grand Hotel on Jawaharlal Nehru Road, and turn left down Lindsay Street to shop in the bustling lanes around New Market. Back on Jawaharlal Nehru Road, the now slightly shabby Indian Museum holds exceptional stone and metal sculptures rescued from sites in eastern India. Farther on, you pass The Asiatic Society, founded by the Oxford-educated scholar and judge Sir William Jones in 1784. Turn left on Park Street, then right on to Middleton Row to see the early 19th-century St. Thomas's Church, where Mother Teresa lay in state for a week before her funeral in 1997. Beyond Camac Street, turn left on to Shakespeare Sarani, then take a stroll around South Park Street Cemetery, with large tombstones dating back to the 18th century. Head back the way you came, stopping off at St. Paul's Cathedral on Cathedral Road. Completed in the "Indo-Gothic" style in 1837, the towered cathedral is set among lawns and gardens and welcomes visitors. Finally, you reach the symbol of British imperialism in the East, the now-restored Victoria Memorial, fronted by a statue of the Queen-Empress seated in regal glory.

IN FOCUS I The most spectacular of Kolkata's many festivals, **Durga Puja**, falls in September and October and brings the city to a near standstill to celebrate Durga, the god Shiva's wife in her destructive form. Idok-makers work all year to create hundreds of Durga images, painting their staw and unbaked clay models in gaudy colors to look like film stars. People create gitzry settings for the fierce and furious 10-armed goddess, and crowds stroll the streets to view them for 10 days before Maha Ashtami, the day when the images are paraded down to the Hooghly River and immersed in its waters.

FROM: Babu's Ghat, Kolkata, India To: Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, India

ROADS: Esplanade, Lindsay Street, Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Park Street, Middleton Row, Camac Street, Shakespeare Sarani

DISTANCE: 6 miles (10 km)
DRIVING TIME: 20 minutes
WHEN TO GO: September

through March
PLANNING: Get to the Indian
Museum when it opens at 10 a.m.
wbtourismgov.in



228 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

FROM OSLO TO THE FJORDS

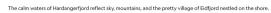
Say goodbye to vibrant Oslo and head for Norway's wild south, with deep-blue fjords, mighty snow-capped mountains, and powerful waterfalls. Here, you'll find both high-octane adventure and ample space for calm contemplation.

he E18 leads west out of Oslo toward Drammen. After about 15 minutes, turn

north on the E16, which climbs steadily higher to the village of Sollihøgda. As you descend on the other side, panoramic views of the agricultural Ringerike Plain and its ring of mountains open up before you. At the large roundabout outside Hønefoss, take the forested $to urist \, route \, RV7 \, toward \, Gol. \, Stop \, in \, Krøderen \, to \, see \, the \, 19th-century \, railway \, station, \, now \, a \, museum \, constant \, route \, RV7 \, toward \, Gol. \, Stop \, in \, Krøderen \, to \, see \, the \, 19th-century \, railway \, station, \, now \, a \, museum \, constant \, route \, RV7 \, toward \, Gol. \, Stop \, in \, Krøderen \, to \, see \, the \, 19th-century \, railway \, station, \, now \, a \, museum \, constant \, route \, r$ and part of a heritage railway line. In summer, take a steam train to Vikersund and back. After hugging the long eastern shoreline of misty and tranquil Lake Krøderen, you'll enter the deep, narrow Hallingdal Valley, a prime skiing area in winter and good hiking country in summer. Drive up to the municipalities of Flå and Gol and continue along the north shore of Strandafjorden. When approaching the wooden, red-painted Hol church, the largest in the area, stay on the RV7 for another steep climb to the ski resort of Geilo, and finally an ascent to the edge of the Handangervidda plateau. The distinctive $flat-topped\ Hallings karvet\ mountain\ range\ is\ in\ view\ to\ the\ north.\ The\ road\ descends\ to\ the\ Måbødalen$ $Canyon - where you can take a path to V\"{o}rings fossen waterfall, a white-water cascade that drops about$ 600 feet (183 m) into the canyon—and then drops down to sea level at Hardangerfjord, the world's third largest fjord. Continue on the RV7 along the shoreline, and cross the fjord on the new Hardanger bridge. Head for Voss on the RV7/13 through the Vallavik Tunnel, taking the RV13 to rejoin the E16 at Voss (see AV12 to RV13 to RV13Excursion) for the two-hour drive to Bergen, gateway to the fjords.

EXCURSION | Canyons and hairpin bends await you beyond Voss, Driving northeast along the E16 takes you EXCURSION Canyons and hairpin bends await you beyond Voss. Driving northeast along the E16 takes you to the Stahlem Canyon, lined by one of the steepest roads in Norway. On either side of the canyon are the Stalheimfossen and Sivlefossen waterfalls, with 413-foot (126 m) and 541-foot (165 m) cascades, respectively. Farther on is the world-famous Flâm Railway. The spectacular 50-minute journey between Flâm and Myrdal passes towerin mountains, thundering waterfalls, and green meadows. At Flâm, you can also take a cruise on the narrow Næreyfjord, hemmed in by high, steep-sided mountains.

FROM: Oslo, Norway To: Bergen, Norway ROADS: E18, E16, RV7, RV7/13 DISTANCE: 300 miles (480 km)
DRIVING TIME: 7.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Snow may close roads in winter. visitnorway.com





THE TOP

1 SOUTH BEACH, MIAMI, FLORIDA

When the shimmering sand and deepblue sea are lost to the night, South Beach shines brightest. Three parallel roads— Washington Avenue, Collins Avenue, and fabled Ocean Drive—offer a fine confectionary of art deco buildings, with boutiques, bars, nightclubs, and restaurants that stay wide awake till dawn.

PLANNING: To get the full South Beach effect, go when it's busiest—in winter and on weekends. miamibeachfl.gov

2 THE STRIP, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

"Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas" says the sign by the road from the airport. This is Las Vegas Boulevard South, better known as the Strip, a 4-mile (6 km) dazzler that becomes neon heaven at night. From the replica Eiffel Tower of the Paris Las Vegas Hotel and St. Mark's Tower at the Venetian Resort Hotel Casino to the classic Flamingo and Caesar's Palace, it's hard to take it all in at one go—you'll need to drive up and down several times everal times.

PLANNING: Avoid holiday weekends. vegas.com

3 SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Sydney's waterside setting around a magnificent harbor makes it great to tour at night, which is why evening tours of all kinds are offered. Take the Sydney Harbour Tunnel to the bright lights of Luna Park, then turn back across the Sydney Harbour Bridge for views of the Opera House. Coming off the bridge, head up Observatory Hill for a panorama of the nighttime city, and you can see the night sky close up from the Observatory.

PLANNING: Observatory visits need to be prebooked. *sydneyobservatory.com.au*

4 ROME, ITALY

Always spectacular, Rome's fountains and monuments are particularly appealing when lit up at night. Start with a circuit of the Colosseum, then head past the Forum to Piazza Venezia. Join Corso Vittorio Emanuele to cross the Tiber, where Castel Sant'Angelo looks ready for the final act of Tosca, and head for St. Peter's Basilica.

PLANNING: Traffic should be less chaotic on Sunday evenings, and in August. rome.info

10

CITIES IN YOUR HEADLIGHTS

Bright lights in big cities—as darkness falls, lights start to blaze and dazzle, transforming great metropolises into nocturnal wonderlands.

5 CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Sunsets in Cape Town are famous. Start on Blouberg Beach for the classic view of the warm evening light playing on Table Mountain. Then head back into town and wind your way to Signal Hill, where you can watch the Southern Cross start to shimmer above the mountain while Cape Town twinkles at your feet.

PLANNING: The drive is about 15 miles (24 km). tourismcapetown.co.za

6 BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

Start in the narrow streets and squares of the city's oldest La Boca and San Telmo quarters. Make your way to the quieter Puerto Madero waterfront, where the illuminated white marble Fountain of the Nereids depicts the birth of Venus. Driving west from the Plaza de Mayo, don't miss the 22-story Palacio Barolo, with a design inspired by Dante's Divine Comedy. In elegant Recoleta's Avenida Alvear, you might think yourself in Paris. Finish in Palermo Soho, home to hip bars and restaurants.

PLANNING: Restaurants don't come properly alive until 9:30 p.m. turismo.buenosaires.gob.ar/en

7 HONG KONG, CHINA

Escape downtown congestion with a nighttime swing around the south side of Hong Kong island. From the eastern

OPPOSITE: The Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar, was opened in 2008. It is even more of a spectacle by night than it is by day. downtown, head up Tai Tam Road, then east out to Shek O Beach. Back on Tai Tam Road, turn toward Stanley and up to Sir Cecil's Ride on Mount Butler, with a view over Victoria Harbour. Then continue west to Mount Austin Road.

PLANNING: This is a 40-mile (64 km) drive, so set out in good time. *discoverhongkong.com/uk, index.jsp*

8 GOA, INDIA

A serene riverside drive takes you from Goa's old capital to the current one. In Old Goa, start by the baroque 17th-century Basilica of Bom Jesus, containing the tomb of the revered Jesuit saint, Francis Xavier. Head for the banks of the Mandovi River, then west to Ribandar and the historic 16th-century Church of Our Lady of Help. From there the 2-mile (3.2 km) Conde de Linhares Causeway takes you to the state capital, Panaii (Paniirn).

PLANNING: Round the evening off with dinner at Panaji's Hotel Venite, which has been mingling the best of local and Portuguese cuisine since the 1950s. goa-tourism.com

9 DOHA, QATAR

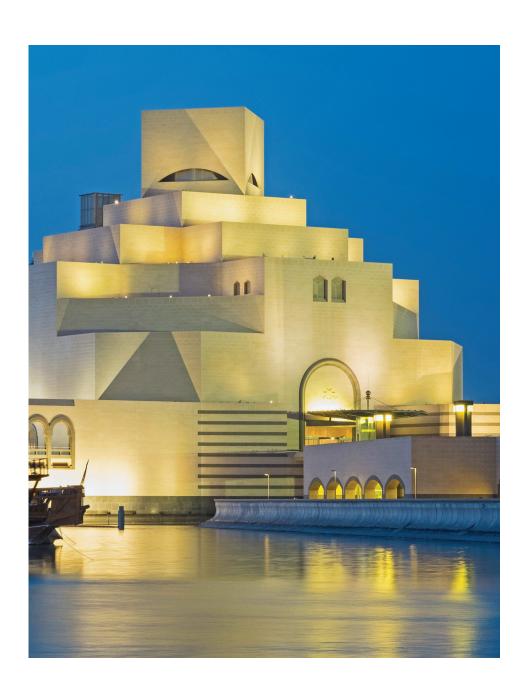
Be amazed by the oil-rich city's extraordinary post-2000 architecture, much of it best seen illuminated by night. Begin with the new National Museum of Gatar and the nearby Museum of Islamic Art. Drive round the Corniche, which lines Doha Bay, taking a detour past the stunning white Imam Muhammad Ibn Abd Al Wahhab Mosque, then stop at Katara to stroll past food and market stalls

PLANNING: Explore the labyrinthine alleys of Souq Waqif, an ancient market near the south end of the Corniche. *visitqatar.qa*

10 ATHINA (ATHENS), GREECE

Two hills, Lycabettus and Filopappou, give the most spectacular nighttime views of the Acropolis and Parthenon. Park on Lycabettus Hill and walk up to its viewing area. Then do the same on Filopappou Hill for the best views of the Areopagus. Next, head toward the port of Peiraias for a modern wonder—the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center.

PLANNING: In Kastella, try the *kakavia*—a traditional fisherman's soup. *thisisathens.org*



EXPLORING ATTICA'S COASTLINE

Leave behind the snarled traffic and smog of Athina (Athens) as you wind your way along the coast to Akra Sounio, then north to Agios Stefanos. This is a snapshot of Greece in miniature—hills, beach resorts, small villages, old churches, and fascinating classical sites.

n Athens, follow Leof. Syngrou southwest to Hwy. 91, then turn left at the port of Piraeus and head south on the coastal route, with the clear, sparkling Aegean to your right. South of the suburban sprawledge and the clear of the clear ofis Vouliagméni, a popular beach resort and escape from the city. A small temple to Apollo lies just south of town. Continue south along the coastal road until the imposing Temple of Poseidon, dating from about 440 B.C., comes into view at the peninsula's southern tip. When visiting the temple, don't follow the example of the British Romantic poet, Lord Byron, who carved his name on the ruins. Back on Hwy. 91, turn right and almost immediately the route number changes to 89 and the road heads north, following the coast before veering inland through fertile lands toward the small town of Markopoulo. After Markopoulo, backtrack to Hwy. 89 and turn left. Turn right onto Hwy. 85 almost immediately, which brings you to the port of Rafina. Head for the harbor, following signs for "Ferries," and $try\ one\ of\ the\ waterside\ restaurants.\ Return\ to\ Hwy.\ 85\ and\ continue\ north\ to\ the\ smaller\ resort\ of\ Nea$ Makri, where you join Hwy. 83 and turn right toward Marathonas (Marathon), site of the Battle of Marathon in which the Athenian army defeated the Persians (see Hidden History). To visit Tymfos Marathona, the simple burial mound under which the Athenian dead were interred, drive about 2.5 $miles \, (4\,km) \, south \, of \, Marathonas \, and \, look \, for \, the \, sign. \, There \, is \, a \, small \, but \, worthwhile \, Archaeological$ $Museum \, far ther \, north \, on \, Hwy. \, 83 \, on \, the \, left. \, From \, Marathonas, continue \, on \, the \, now \, winding \, Hwy. \, 83 \, left \, and \, because \, for all the most of the most$ until you reach the leafy village of Agios Stefanos. Take a right onto the main Athina-Thessaloniki highway (Hwy. 1/E75) to return to Athina.

I HIDDEN HISTORY In 490 a.c., 10,000 Athenians defeated an army of 25,000 Persians at Marathonas; the Athenians lost only 192 men, the Persians 6,400. News of the victory was carried back to Athina by one of the soldier Phedippides, who ran all the way from Marathonas to the Acropolis in full armor. After relaying the information, he died on the spot from his exertions. The present-day term "marathon" commemorates that brave feat, and each October a marathon is run allond the original route.



FROM: Loop route from Athina, Greece ROADS: Leof. Syngrou, Hwys. 91, 89, 88, 83, 1/E75. DISTANCE: 120 miles (190 km) DRIVING TIME: 4 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: During the summer months, carry drinking water.

The ruined Temple of Poseidon on the headland of Akra Sounio is visible from miles away





A fairy-tale castle complete with cylindrical towers looms over the village of Manzanares el Real.

CDAIN

MADRID MOUNTAIN DRIVE

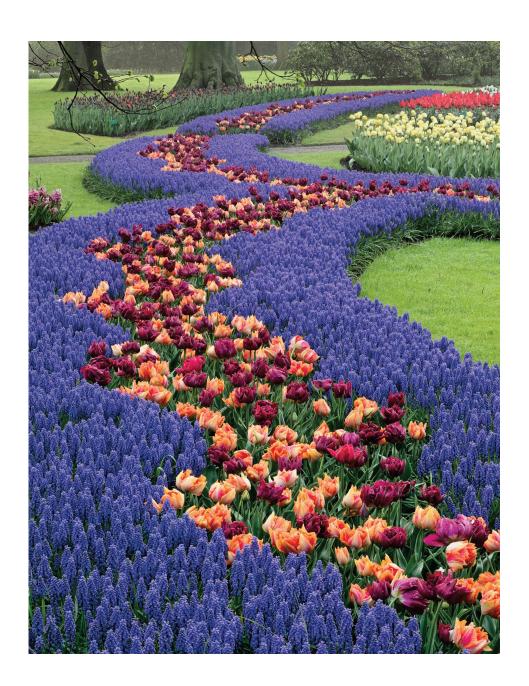
Take a day trip from Madrid and drive northwest of the city past dramatic landscapes. There are plenty of places to stop and breathe the mountain air in the Sierra de Guadarrama, a range of granite mountains that runs between the plains of La Mancha and Castile.

aving sated your appetite on Madrid's jaw-dropping trio of great art galleries—the Prado, the Thyssen-Bornemisza, and the Reina Sofía—head north up the Paseo de la Castellana and take the M-607. After Colmenar el Viejo, turn right onto the M-609, then follow the M-608 through $the \, Cuenca \, Alta \, del \, Manzanares \, nature \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, with \, its \, imposing \, and \, well-deliverable and \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, with \, its \, imposing \, and \, well-deliverable and \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, with \, its \, imposing \, and \, well-deliverable and \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, with \, its \, imposing \, and \, well-deliverable and \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, with \, its \, imposing \, and \, well-deliverable and \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, with \, its \, imposing \, and \, well-deliverable and \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, with \, its \, imposing \, and \, well-deliverable and \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, with \, its \, imposing \, and \, well-deliverable and \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, where \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, where \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, where \, reserve \, toward \, Manzanares \, el \, Real, \, where \, reserve \, toward \, reserve \, el \, Real, \, where \, reserve \, el \, Rea$ $preserved\ 15 th-century\ castle.\ Continue\ toward\ Cerceda, then\ take\ the\ M-607\ toward\ Navacerrada.\ The$ road starts to climb as you drive past a reservoir on the left. With a 16th-century church and some good $restaurants, Navacerrada\ is\ popular\ with\ weekenders\ from\ Madrid.\ After\ the\ village,\ take\ the\ M-601\ up$ $to the \,mountain \,pass \,of \,Puerto \,de \,Navacerrada. \,At the \,top, turn \,right \,onto \,the \,M-604 \,toward \,Cotos, \,the \,M-604 \,toward \,Cotos \,described a constant of the \,M-604 \,toward \,Cotos \,described a cons$ valley on your left. The former ski station of Puerto de Cotos mountain pass, now the Peñalara nature reserve, is 10 minutes farther on. Stop to stretch your legs on one of the well-marked hiking routes $(leaflets\,available\,at\,the\,information\,center).\,The\,winding\,road\,drops\,2,\!300\,feet\,(700\,m)\,into\,the\,Lozoya$ $valley \ where, just before \ Rascafr\'ia, you \ reach \ the \ Real \ Monasterio \ de \ Santa \ Mar\'ia \ de \ El \ Paular, founded$ in 1390. Leaving Rascafría, which has several restaurants, take the M-611 toward Miraflores de la Sierra. After crossing the Río Lozoya, the road climbs again with a series of sharp bends to the 5,892-foot $(1,796\,m)\,pass\,of\,Puerto\,de\,Morcuera, with \,superb\,views\,over\,the\,plains\,of\,Castile.\,The\,road\,winds\,down$ to the village of Miraflores de la Sierra, surrounded by oak forests and a pleasant place for a stroll and $\,$ a coffee. To return to Madrid, retrace your steps from Soto del Real.

FROM: Loop route from Madrid, Spain Roads: Paseo de la Castellana, M.-607, M.-609, M.-601, M.-604, M.-611, M.-609 DISTANCE: 110 miles (177 km) DRIVING TIME: 3 hours WHEN TO Go: Spring through fall RANNING WARTHS (197 km)



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THE NETHERLANDS |

SPRINGTIME IN HOLLAND

 $In spring, Amsterdam's \ parks, window \ boxes, and flower \ markets \ overflow \ with \ tulips. \ For$ a yet more spectacular display, take a tour of the bulb fields of Haarlem, where a rainbow $colored\ patchwork\ of\ blossoms\ lights\ up\ the\ flat\ Dutch\ landscape.$



The historic city of Haarlem sits astride the Spaarne River and is the center of the tulip-growing industry.

ead out of the center of Amsterdam along Vijzelstraat, then take the S100, the S106, and the A10/E22 until you reach the A4/E19, heading southwest. At Junction 4 (Nieuw Vennep), take the N207 exit, toward Lisse. When you meet the N208, turn left for Lisse, a small, pretty town in the middle of the Bloembollenstreek, the bulb-growing district, whose flat, multicolored fields stretch for nearly 20 miles (32 km) from Haarlem in the north to Leiden in the south. In Lisse, the Museum de Zwarte Tulp (Grachtweg 2A; closed Mondays) is devoted to the fascinating history of the $tulip, introduced to the \, Netherlands \, from \, Turkey \, in \, the \, 1550s \, and \, so \, highly \, valued \, that \, small \, for tunes \, the \, contract of the$ were once paid for prize blooms. Head north out of town for the entrance to Keukenhof (mid-March through mid-May), the 80-acre (32 ha) park that serves as a showcase for the Dutch flower industry. Spectacular colors (and heady scents) are the theme of this park, where bulbs are planted in layers to ensure continuous color from March through May. Some of the gardens are themed—natural, water, secret, and historical-and there are even mazes. From Keukenhof, turn right back into Lisse, then follow the N208 southward through the bulb fields to Sassenheim. On the edge of the town is the pretty Ruïne van Teylingen, the remains of a 13th-century castle. Follow the N443 until it meets the N206 near Noordwijk aan Zee (see Highlights). The N206 will take you northeast to Haarlem through some of the bulb district's most colorful fields. Visit Haarlem (see Highlights) before returning to Amsterdam on the A9/10.

EXCURSION Detour to Zandwoort, Amsterdam's nearest beach resort, on N206 and N201. Behind the beach strip, the Nationaal Park de Kennerduinen (Kennemer Dunes National Park) has varied habitats and attracts rare and unusual birds, and has breeding nightingales and Party) has varied habitats and attracts rare and unusual birds, and has breeding nightingales and woodlarks. Well-marked trails meander through a landscape of dunes, ponds, and small forested areas. The long, sandy beach on the other side of the dunes is a pleasure to walk along. Return to Amsterdam on N201 via **Hoofddorp**, where the Museum de Cruquius (March through October) is worth a stop to learn how Holland's bulb fields were created in the mid-19th century.

OPPOSITE: Muscaria (grape hyacinth) and glowing tulips form a river of color in the Keukenhof gardens.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Visit the small seaside town of **Noordwijk aan Zee** with miles of glorious sand beaches backed by dunes. The conditions here are perfect for windsurfing.

Haarlem's most famous son is the protraitist of Holland's Golden Age, Frans Hals (1581–1666). Visit the **Frans Hals Museum** to see the world's largest collection of his paintings.

The late Gothic church of Sint Bavokerk in Haarlem dates mainly from the 16th century and has a richly decorated organ built in 1738.

FROM: Loop route from Amsterdam, the Netherlands ROADS: Vijzelstraat, S100, S106, A10/E22, A4/E19, N207, N208, N443, N206, A9 DISTANCE: 62 miles (100 km) DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Late March PLANNING: Keukenhof shuts when the season ends in mid-May. holland.com, keukenhof.nl



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Stirling's famous castle is perched dramatically at the town's highest point

SCOTLAND I

GLASGOW TO ST. ANDREWS

This pleasant drive takes you north and east from Glasgow past gently rolling hills to Stirling and its magnificent castle. From here, you follow a rural route south of the Ochil Hills to the historic university city of St. Andrews, also the home of golf.

eave gritty yet cultured Glasgow behind, and from Junction 17 of the M8 motorway, follow the A82 Dumbarton road to the A81, heading north out of the city. Follow the valley of Strath Blane, then turn right onto the A81, which descends into the wide Forth Valley. Alhead of you, Stirling climbs along the spine of a long volcanic crag. Among the attractions lining the city's cobbled streets are the 15th-century Church of the Holy Rude (Rood), where the 13-month-old James VI (later James I of England) was crowned king of Scotland in 1567 as successor to his deposed mother, Mary, Queen of Scots. Also worth seeing are Argyll's Lodging, the 1632 Townhouse of the Dukes of Argyll, and the ornate 16th-century facade of Mar's Wark, a grand residence planned but never completed by the first Earl of Mar. Pride of the town, though, is Stirling Castle, home to the Scottish Royal Court between 1488 and 1625. From Stirling, the A91 leads east under the green and brown rampart of the beautiful Ochil Hills. At Dollar, turn left and walk up steep, narrow Dollar Glen. High on the hillside is the stark, atmospheric ruin of Castle Campbell, an imposing 15th-century stronghold. The A91 continues into the flatter farming country of Fife and reaches the small city of St. Andrews, looking out onto the North Sea (see Stay a While).

I STAY A WHILE I Set above broad sands and rocky bays, **St. Andrews**, known for having the world's oldest golf course, is a golfer's paradise. History buffs will also adore the cathedral ruins on the headland and the two university quadrangles of St. Salvador and St. Many's, St. Andrew's Castle is noted for its grim "bottleneck" dungeon and mine tunnels dug in 1546, when besiegers were attacked underground by their foes, who had dug a counter tunnel from inside the castle's walls.

FROM: Glasgow, Scotland
TO: St. Andrews, Scotland
ROADS: M8, A82, A81, A81, A91
DISTANCE: 95 miles (153 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Daylight driving
time is limited in winter when



days are shorter. visitscotland.com

ALSO RECOMMENDED

SOUTH FROM OTTAWA, CANADA

From Ottawa, head southwest to the old cotton town of Almonte, then to historic Perth. Carry on to Kingston, at the northeast end of Lake Ontario, whose sights include Bellevue House—a period gem that takes you back to the 1840s when it was the home of John A. Macdonald, later Canada's first prime minister. End the day with a leisurely boat cruise from Gananoque. ontariotravel.net

OHIO & ERIE CANALWAY, OHIO

Cleveland lies at the northern end of the Ohio & Erie Canalway, built in the 1820s and 30s as a goods route to link Lake Erie with the Ohio River. It is now a National Heritage Area that encompasses parks, trails, museums, and local roads as well as waterways in the valleys of the Cuyahoga and Tuscarawas Rivers. Cuyahoga Valley National Park is the gem of the region, with waterfalls, streams, and abundant wildlife.

• BRANDYWINE VALLEY, DELAWARE/PENNSYLVANIA

The idyllic Brandywine Valley's many museums include Rockwood Park and Museum, one-time home of banker Joseph Shipley, who built it in the 1850s in the Gothic style. If museums don't appeal, enjoy hot dogs at a Wilmington Blue Rocks minor league baseball game. In early May, savor tea and sandwiches while watching the Devon Horse Show, the oldest horse and dog show in the U.S.A.

brandywinevalley.com

• TURQUOISE TRAIL, NEW MEXICO

Connecting Santa Fe and Albuquerque, this drive along N.M. 14 owes its name to the blue-green stone first mined in the region by the Pueblo people. Stop at the quirky Tinkertown Museum, protected by unusual walls-50,000 glass bottles. The Garden of the Gods is a spectacular area of sandstone deposits, running alongside a 4-mile (6 km) stretch of the road.

turquoisetrail.org

DAMNOEN SADUAK, THAILAND

Take a break from the swelter of Bangkok, though not from noise and crowds, by

driving west for 62 miles (100 km) along the Phetkasem Road (Rte. 4) to the floating market in Damnoen Saduak. The market takes place in a khlong (canal), packed tight with narrow boats that brim with delicious strawberries, dragon fruit, spices, meats, bowls of noodles, spicy salads, and sticky rice. Return to Bangkok via Nakhon Pathom, which has the largest pagoda in Southeast Asia. bangkok.com

COLOMBO TO GALLE, SRI LANKA

Head south from Sri Lanka's commercial capital, Colombo, along the coastal A2. Break for sun-worshiping and surfing at the resort town of Hikkaduwa, then continue along the coast to the ancient port city of Galle in the far southwest of the island. Historic Dutch influence is still visible, with the addition of gorgeous luxury villas hovering on the edge of the sea. srilankatourism.org

PORVOO & LOVIISA, FINLAND

Porvoo, Finland's second oldest town and its 13th-century trade hub, lies just 40 minutes east of Helsinki. Continue east along the E18 to Loviisa, with wooden houses and 18th-century fortifications, built as a defense against the Russians.

NELAHOZEVES, CZECH REPUBLIC

Drive 15 miles (24 km) north from Prague to stately Nelahozeves Castle, whose collections include original manuscripts by Mozart and Beethoven and paintings by Bruegel, Velázquez, and Rubens. In the village of Nelahozeves, visit the birthplace of the composer Antonín Dvořák. prague.eu

EDINBURGH TO NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, SCOTLAND/ENGLAND

Drive south on the A68 through the beautiful hills of the Borders. At Carter Bar, cross into England, where Northumberland National Park holds wonders large and small—from Hadrian's Wall to glimpses of otters in rivers and streams. Pause for a pub lunch in a village such as Falstone, before heading on to Newcastle upon Tyne. northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk

LISBON TO PORTO, PORTUGAL

From Lisbon, head north to Leiria, dominated by a hilltop castle. Feast on fresh sardines in Figueira da Foz, then detour inland to the university city of Coimbra. Admire the canals and whitewashed houses of Aveiro. At the mouth of the Douro River, explore the atmospheric streets and music bars of the ancient city of Porto.

portugal-live.net

• TIBERIAS TO TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

From the ancient city of Tiberias, on the Sea of Galilee, home to the tomb of the 12thcentury sage Maimonides, meander eastward to the coast, a golden expanse of sand. The 100-mile (160 km) journey takes you through modern Haifa, on the slopes of sacred Mount Carmel, and on to Herod's port city of Caesarea Maritima, full of ancient ruins, to end in bustling Tel Aviv.

GENOA TO LA SPEZIA, ITALY

This 50-mile (80 km) drive begins in Genoa a powerful Mediterranean city in medieval times. Eastward along the Gulf of Genoa, be sure to stop in the red-tile-roofed villages of Santa Margherita Ligure and Portofino, clustered on a green peninsula along boat-dotted waters, From La Spezia. hike the Cinque Terre fishing villages, connected by paths overlooking the sea. Lodging is cheaper and crowds are few in the winter months.

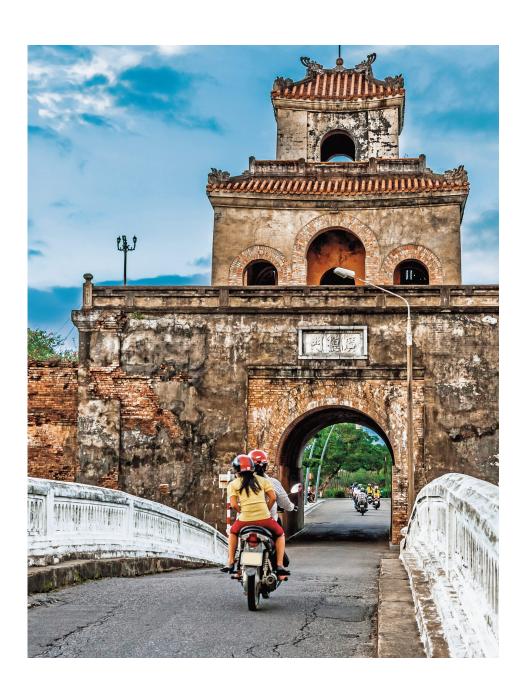
italiantourism.com

CAPE PENINSULA, SOUTH AFRICA

Who could visit Cape Town without also visiting the legendary Cape of Good Hope? Head south to Simon's Town, which faces over False Bay on the Cape Peninsula's east side and is an attractive place to find a meal. In spring or early summer, you may see whales in False Bay. Pause at Boulder's Bay for its penguin colony. Then carry on down to Cape Point, where a funicular takes you up to a lighthouse and jaw-dropping views. Your return journey up the peninsula's west side takes you along Chapman's Peak Drive, with mountains on one side and roiling sea on the other.

capetown.travel

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CHAPTER 7

DRIVING THROUGH HISTORY

very route on these pages has its own story to tell—whether it follows in the footsteps of explorers and pioneers, visits haunting battlegrounds, or uncovers long-vanished civilizations. A tour through the picturesque streets and leafy lanes of eastern Massachusetts follows the route taken by Paul Revere to warn of the British Army's advance on the eve of the Revolutionary War. It also traces the path of the march of the volunteer Minutemen, and visits the first battlefields of the war. An epic North Dakota road trip along the Missouri River shadows the frontier forays made in 1804 by explorers Lewis and Clark. On the other side of the world, a short drive in Goa, India, mingles gorgeous Hindu temples with the gleaming baroque churches of the state's once $thriving \, Portuguese \, colony. \, Moving \, into \, antiquity, \, an \,$ archaeological odyssey through Turkey brings you face to face with the remnants of civilizations as sophisticated and complex as our own—cities founded by Alexander the Great, and temples honoring the Greek and Roman gods. Meanwhile, in southwest France, remote Cathar castles testify to an extraordinary period of schism in the Catholic Church.

Hué was the royal capital of Vietnam for more than two centuries until 1945

DRIVING THROUGH HISTORY | 239



This monumental statue of a viking in Gimli serves as reminder of the town's Icelandic heritage.

CANADA

WINNIPEG CIRCLE

Bursting with history and culture, this rich and varied loop drive around the prairies of southeastern Manitoba takes in some pretty scenery as well as a number of museums and heritage sites that reveal the region's eclectic past.

ying along an ancient travel route at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, Winnipeg is one of the oldest settlements in western Canada. At the city's southern outskirts is Riel House National Historic Site, based around the small Red River frame house built for the mother of $the founder of Manitoba, Louis Riel. \ As well as recounting the family's history, the site celebrates the$ $culture\ of\ the\ M\'{e}tis-descendants\ of\ native\ people\ and\ European\ fur\ traders.\ From\ Winnipeg,\ take$ Hwy, 75 south to the francophone village of Ste,-Agathe, then head east on Rte, 305 and Hwy, 52 to the regional hub of Steinbach and stop at Mennonite Heritage Village (see Highlights). Travel north on $Hwy.\ 12, Trans-Canada\ 1, and\ Rte.\ 206\ to\ the\ prairie\ hills,\ woodlands,\ and\ artificial\ lake\ at\ Birds\ Hill$ Provincial Park. From the park's west gate, turn south on Hwy. 59, west on Hwy. 101, then north on Hwv. 9 to Rte. 238—the River Road Heritage Parkway. This pleasant back road hugs the Red River. passing buildings that reflect a strong 19th-century English presence. Wander among the 1840s gravestones at St. Andrew's Church (south of Lockport), then cross the lane to St. Andrew's Rectory National $Historic\,Site, an\,1854\,house\,with\,exhibits\,on\,Anglican\,missionary\,activities.\,Continue\,north\,to\,Selkirk\,Market and Market and Mark$ to climb aboard an 1897 steamship at the Marine Museum of Manitoba. Continue to Gimli, an old Icelandic fishing village on the shore of Lake Winnipeg, then take Rte. 231 west and Hwy. 7 south to Stonewall, where three kiln towers that were in use until the 1960s overlook a beach at Stonewall Quarry the control of the $Park.\ Visit\ Oak\ Hammock\ Marsh\ Interpretive\ Centre\ to\ take\ a\ guided\ canoe\ outing\ through\ reclaimed$ marsh teeming with wildlife, before returning to Winnipeg.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

If you're bringing the kids along for the ride, visit Manitoba Children's Museum at The Forks in Winnipeg for hands-on fun such as dressing up, seeing things through a mosquito's eyes, and clambering around a vintage locomotive.

Mennonite Heritage Village is a 40-acre (16 ha) open-air museum that re-creates the feel of a Mennonite village of the 1800s and tells the story of Mennonite religious persecution and migration to the New World.

The compound of **Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site**, near Lockport,
was begun in 1830, making it the
oldest intact stone fur-trading post in
North America. Today's visitors are
treated to a vivid and detailed
portrait of the fur trade.

FROM: Loop route from Winnipeg, Canada ROADS: Hwy, 75, Rte, 305, Hwys, 52, 12, Trans-Canada 1, Rte, 206, Hwys, 59, 101, 9, Rtes, 238, 231, Hwy, 7 DISTANCE: 200 miles (322 km)

DRIVING TIME: 5 hours
WHEN TO GO: May through
October

PLANNING: travelmanitoba.com



240 I DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

MASSACHUSETTS |

REVOLUTIONARY ROADS

In 1775, the revolutionary spirit was in the air in this corner of New England. Follow in revolutionary footsteps as you visit the locations where some of the most momentous events in the course of American history took place.

tart southeast of the center of Lexington and drive northwest along Massachusetts Avenue—the road Paul Revere traveled on his Midnight Ride to the town to warn of the approaching British Army. You soon pass Munroe Tavern—used as a field hospital for wounded British soldiers—then come to Lexington Common National Historic Site (or Battle Green), where the first shots of the war were fired on April 19, 1775. Nearby is Buckman Tavern, the headquarters of the Minutemen, with its

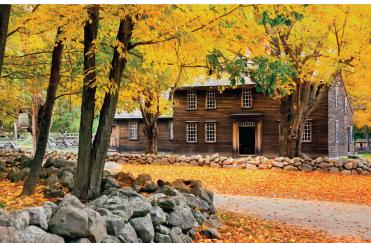
interior restored to look as it did in 1775. Continue on Massachusetts Avenue out of Lexington. Following the route taken by the British on their way to Concord, cross over 1-95, turn right onto Wood Street, then left onto Old Massachusetts Avenue and left again onto Mass. 2A. The drive now falls within Minute Man National Historical Park, which preserves the landscape as it was during those tumultuous times. Park at Minute Man Visitor Center and take a short walk along Nelson Road, which retains the crushed stone surface that covered the entire road in 1775. Continue west on Mass. 2A, passing a memorial marking the spot where Paul Revere was captured. Veer right on Lexington Road toward Concord, and go past Meriam's Corner, where the colonists attacked the British on their retreat to Boston. Pass Concord Museum, on the left, then from Concord's green, turn right onto Mass. 62, then left, and right again onto Monument Street. The militia's first victory occurred at North Bridge, across the Concord River, as they blocked British progress. Explore the Visitor Center here, or return to Concord (see Unexpected Pleasure).

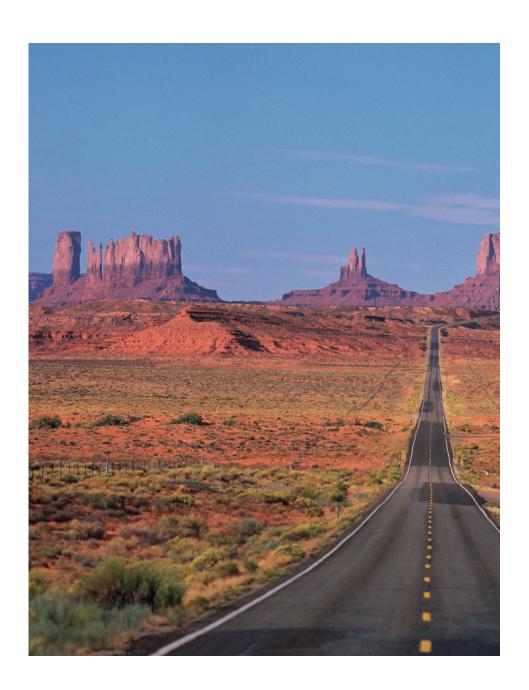
I UNEXPECTED PLEASURE I There is more to Concord than Revolutionary history. In the early 19th century, the town was the birthplace of Transcendentialism, a literary and philosophical movement espoused by residents, including Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Infini out more about both men at the Concord Museum, the Ralph Waldo Emerson House, and the Old Manse—the home of Emerson and author Nathaniel Hawthorne.



FROM: Lexington,
Massachusetts
ROADS: Massachusetts
ROADS: Massachusetts
Avenue, 1-95, Wood Street, Old
Massachusetts Avenue, Mass.
2A, Lexington Road, Mass. 62,
Monument Street
DISTANCE: 11.5 miles (18 km)
DRIVING TIME: 30 minutes
WHEN TO GO: May through
October
PLANNING:
visit-massachusetts.com

The restored 18th-century Hartwell Tavern stands on Battle Road, where the colonists fought the British





1 GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARKWAY, VIRGINIA

A scenic gateway to Washington, D.C. this short drive begins at Mount Vernon, George Washington's home from 1754 to 1799. It then follows the Virginia shoreline of the wide Potomac River, through beech, maple, and oak woodlands, to the colonial port of Old Town Alexandria and on through bird-rich wetlands.

PLANNING: Avoid rush hour. The 25-mile (40 km) route ends at the junction with I-495.

2 WILDERNESS ROAD HERITAGE HIGHWAY, KENTUCKY

Pioneer and folk hero Daniel Boone blazed the Wilderness Road through the Cumberland Gap to settle Kentucky in the late 18th century. Start at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, near Middlesboro, then head north to Berea.

PLANNING: The 94-mile (151 km) route follows U.S. 25E, Ky. 229, U.S. 25. byways.org

3 SELMA TO MONTGOMERY MARCH BYWAY, ALABAMA

This drive follows U.S. 80 through a landscape where some of the key events of the American civil rights movement took place. A march from Selma on March 7, 1965, attempting to reach the state capital of Montgomery 54 miles (87 km) away, ended in a brutal police confrontation called "Bloody Sunday." Martin Luther King, Jr., led another march on March 25; it started with 3,000 people and ended five days later with 25,000. Various memorials and exhibits can be seen along the route.

PLANNING: Allow at least four hours to give yourself plenty of stopping time along the way. byways.org

4 BILLY THE KID TRAIL, NEW MEXICO

A mountainous loop from Ruidoso visits Wild West sites associated with the gunfighter Billy the Kid. The Byway Interpretive Center and Hubbard Museum of the American West provide background. At

Lincoln State Monument, see the courthouse where, in 1881, Billy the Kid awaited hanging, before his escape. He died in a

gunfight at Fort Sumner.

THE TOP

HISTORIC TRAILS

Relive history on the road, from Native American culture and the civil rights movement, to the march of the Romans and the Australian gold rush.

PLANNING: Allow at least three hours. The 84-mile (135 km) route follows U.S. 70, 380, and N. Mex. 48. *byways.org*

5 TRAIL OF THE ANCIENTS, COLORADO/UTAH

A double-loop route straddling the "Four Corners" takes in a region inhabited since ancient times by Native American peoples and passes through dramatic sculptural landscapes of bare, eroded rock. Covering 480 miles (772 km) it starts at Cortez and Mesa Verde National Park, and includes Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park and the Anasazi Heritage Center.

PLANNING: The route follows U.S. 160, Colo. 145, 184, U.S. 491, C.R. 10, U.S. 191, Utah 95, 275, 261, U.S. 163, 162, 262. byways.org

6 PIONEER HISTORIC BYWAY,

IDAHO

Beginning at Franklin, drive across the southeastern corner of Idaho for 127 miles (204 km) to Freedom. For part of the way, the route follows the Oregon Trail along the Bear River. Conflict with the Shoshone led to the Bear River Massacre of 1863, near Preston. A detour leads to the ghost town of Chesterfield, which was an early Mormon settlement

PLANNING: Allow at least half a day. The route follows U.S. 91, Okla. 34, U.S. 30. pioneerhistoricbyway.org

OPPOSITE: Majestic red sandstone formations rise above the scrubland in Monument Valley, Utah, along the Trail of the Ancients.

7 SAN LUIS OBISPO NORTH COAST BYWAY, CALIFORNIA

Starting at the Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, founded in 1772, head north through spectacular coastal scenery, taking in missions, railroad museums, and Hearst Castle, the palatial mansion of the newspaper tycoon. The drive ends just south of Big Sur.

PLANNING: The 57-mile (92 km) route follows

8 GOLDEN QUEST DISCOVERY TRAIL. WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Begin your trip through gold-rush history in Coolgardie, where gold was struck in 1892. Head east to Kalgoorlie, still a major gold-producing town. Visit its museum and take a tour of the Super Pit, one of world's largest open-cut mines. From Kalgoorlie, drive north along red-dirt roads through ghost towns such as Broad Arrow.

PLANNING: You will need a 4WD, and the best months are August through Octobe australiasgoldenoutback.com

9 GEORGIAN MILITARY ROAD, GEORGIA

Tsarist Russian military engineers built this spectacular road across the Caucasus range, following ancient trade routes. Setting out from Georgia's old capital of Mtskheta, the highlights of your trip include the 13th-century fort-and-church complex of Ananuri and sublime Gergeti Trinity Church, reached from Stepants-

PLANNING: Spring and fall are the best times

10 VIA AUGUSTA, CATALONIA,

SPAIN

Near the beachside village of El Perrelló, you can still see some of the Via Augusta's paving stones as laid by the Romans. Follow the highway north to see Tarragona's Roman amphitheater and Caldes de Malavella's thermal baths, before reaching Empriries where the Romans first landed in Spain in 218 s.c.

PLANNING: In May, Tarragona's Tarraco Viva Festival brings the city's history alive. barcelona -metropolitan.com/travel/catalunya-via-augusta



 $Greenery \, surrounds \, a \, reconstructed \, that ched \, house \, and \, corn \, granary \, at \, the \, Grand \, Village \, of \, the \, Natchez \, Indians.$

I TENNESSEE I ALABAMA I MISSISSIPPI I

NATCHEZ TRACE

Forged by bison, enlarged by Native Americans, and used by explorers, traders, bandits, missionaries, and soldiers traveling between the Cumberland and Mississippi Rivers, Natchez Trace Parkway is one of America's most famous frontier trails.

rom Nashville, the state capital, follow U.S. 31 southwest to Franklin, the site of a Civil War battle in 1864, then Tenn. 96 west to enter the Trace Parkway. Wooded curves give way to the open fields of Tennessee's horse and farm country. Pass Gordon House, one of the few structures remaining from the Old Trace, and a park dedicated to Meriwether Lewis, which contains his grave and a reconstruction of the old log inn (or "stand") where he died from gunshot wounds in 1809. Cross Buffalo River and turn left to loop along a scenic ridge on a section of the old road. You leave the woods for open farmland, before trees return at Sweetwater Branch, where wildflowers garnish the trail in spring. Oak and hickory forests give way to Alabama's flat red-clay plains and cotton fields. Cross the Tennessee River at Colbert Ferry, where Chickasaw Indian George Colbert once charged Andrew Jackson \$75,000 to ferry his army across the river.

Entering Mississippi, you come to the Jamie L. Whitten Bridge over the Tennessee-Tombigbee waterway. Beyond here, look out for Pharr Mounds, eight great, dome-shaped burial mounds constructed by the so-called Mound Builder culture 2,000 years ago. Next you head through a boggy area that is home to great blue herons, and past fields of cotton, soybean, and milo. The Trace then sweeps through pastures and forests before traversing a bottomland of shrubs and swamps. At River Bend, you get panoramic views of the Pearl River, before the parkway follows Ross Barnett Reservoir and reaches Ridgeland's Mississippi's gracious capital, Jackson, then cross miles of farmland and the cultivated floodplain at Big Bayou Pierre. The road rolls past farms and wetlands before climbing up a forested ridge, and terminating at an intersection with U.S. 61. Seven miles southwest is the city of Natchez.

FROM: Nashville, Tennessee
To: Natchez, Mississippi
RRADS: U.S. 31, Tenn. 76,
Natchez Trace Parkway
DISTANCE: 444 miles (715 km)
DRIVING TIME: 8.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: There's only one gas
station on the parkway, at mile
193. nps.gov/natr



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| LOUISIANA |

CAJUN COUNTRY

Down by the bayou in Louisiana's Cajun country sits the Old Spanish Trail, a 19th-century frontier pathway and trading route passing moss-draped oaks, alligator-filled swamps, sugarcane fields, and former slave plantations.

he city of Houma is known for its Cajun music, swamps, fishing, and food. Try a spicy étouffée dish, or a gumbo, before leaving town, then head west on La. 182, passing roadside signs advertising swamp tours of the Atchafalaya Basin, the continent's largest river basin $swamp. \ The\ road\ cuts\ through\ sugarcane\ fields\ and\ soon\ reaches\ the\ turnoff\ for\ the\ alligator\ farm\ and$ trapper's cabin at Wildlife Gardens. Join U.S. 90 and head past the heavy equipment used by the inshore oil industry before crossing the bridge into St. Mary Parish along Bayou Boeuf, a good place to spot bald eagles. Leaving behind the enormous McDermott shipyard, you enter the major port of Morgan $City.\ Following\ signs\ for\ Berwick/La.\ 182,\ take\ the\ Long-Allen\ Bridge\ across\ Atchafalaya\ River\ and\ go$ through the tiny towns of Berwick and Patterson. The drive now passes Louisiana's "sugar bowl," where plantations—each with its own sugar mill—flourished before the Civil War. Soon, La. 182 feeds into U.S. 90 before veering off into cane fields. A couple of miles on is Centerville, a former sugar hub with many Victorian homes and antebellum planter's mansions. After the small town of Garden City, the road becomes a stately boulevard through the restored downtown and elegant historic district of Franklin. Continuing northwest, you'll arrive at Jeanerette, whose Bicentennial Museum has exhibits on the $sugar industry \ and \ bayou \ life. \ The \ drive \ wanders \ through \ cane \ country \ to \ the \ attractive \ historic \ district$ of New Iberia. Turn right onto La. 31, crossing more sugarcane fields to St. Martinville, an elegant French-style town known as Petit Paris. Continue on to your final destination, the friendly town of Breaux Bridge.

I HIDDEN HISTORY I known as the "Capital of Cajun Country," Lafayette is a 20-mile (32 km) trip on La. 182 from New Iberia. The colorful city has a number of dance halls, restaurants, and music venues where you can enjoy local zydeco music. Find out about Cajun history in Vermillorville, a hortiga end folk; park, and visit the Acadian Cultural Center to learn about the lives of the French-speaking Acadians who settled in the area at the end of the 18th century.



FROM: Houma, Louisiana
TO: Breaux Bridge, Louisiana
ROAOS: La. 182, U.S. 90, La. 31
DISTANCE: 108 miles (174 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO 60: Spring
through fall
PLANNING: Breaux Bridge holds
a crawfish festival on the first
weekend of May every year,
drivetheost.com





ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

I NORTH DAKOTA I SOUTH DAKOTA I

LEWIS AND CLARK

Following in the footsteps of explorers Lewis and Clark, this drive along the banks of the Missouri River passes sites commemorating Native American history, from early settlements 10,000 years ago to the Indian wars of the late 1800s.



A traditional sod house built from tough, thickly rooted prairie grass at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park

In the early days of the 19th century, the land beyond America's western frontier was unknown to the still-infant nation. In 1804, President Thomas Jefferson commissioned a group of fearless explorers—led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark—to explore the wilderness, sail to the end of the Missouri River, and reach the Pacific Coast. This drive follows part of the route taken by Lewis and Clark, flanking both sides of the Missouri. You start on the river's east bank, heading north from the state capital, Bismarck, on N. Dak. 1804 (named after the year of the expedition), You soon pass

Double Ditch Indian Village State Historic Site, a former village of the Mandan tribe, who were among the first Native Americans encountered by Lewis and Clark on their journey. From here, proceed 30 miles (48 km) to Washburn and follow the signs to North Dakota Lewis and Clark, Interpretative Center, which provides an overview of the expedition, with a special emphasis on the time they spent at Fort Mandan. There are also displays of Native American artifacts from every tribe the pair encountered on their journey. Nearby, visit the reconstructed Fort Mandan Overlook State Historic Site, not far

I THE MANDAN AND HIDATSA TRIBES I The Mandan and Hidatsa of North Dakota built their characteristic earth-lodge dwellings on a wooden frame covered with willow branches, grass, and sod. Each lodge housed up to 17 people, and was owned by the matriarch of the family. She was responsible for building and maintaining the lodge, as well as for farming, dressing skins, and sewing clothing, Mandan history relates that their people pre-dated the Hidatsa in the region, and that they taught the wandering Hidatsa to build settled villages and grow corn and vegetables. The Mandan also created a major focal point of trade on the Missouri, and established strong, well-defended communities.

THE BLUFFS OF THE RIVER WHICH WE PASSED TODAY WERE UPWARDS OF A HUNDRED FEET HIGH ... CONSIDERABLE QUANTITIES OF PUMICE STONE AND LAVA ... ARE BROKEN AND WASHED DOWN BY THE RAIN AND MELTING SNOW.

-MERIWETHER LEWIS

downstream from the original headquarters of the expedition during the winter of 1804-05. It was at Fort Mandan that Lewis and Clark met the French-Canadian trader Toussaint Charbonneau, whose wife Sacagawea, a Shoshone Indian, became their invaluable guide.

To see one of the few remaining wild sections in the area, take a detour 15 miles (24 km) south of Washburn via N. Dak. 200A to Cross Ranch State Park and Cross Ranch Preserve, where migrating whooping cranes can be seen in fall. Here you can see what the landscape was like 200 years ago, when the river flowed unhindered through native prairies. The park has hiking trails, camporounds, and cances to rent.

Double back to Washburn and continue north on U.S. 83, through the state's coalmining heartlands, to Audubon National Wildlife Refuge, a complex of refuges that provides sanctuary for Canada geese, white

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A reconstructed and furnished earth lodge at Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site.

pelicans, threatened piping plover, and sandhill cranes. From here, head west on N. Dak. 200 along the southern shore of Lake Sakakawea, crossing Garrison Dam, one of the world's largest earthen dams. At Pick City, continue south on N. Dak. 200 to Country Road 37, and follow signs to Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site (see Highlights). Continue driving south, through the quiet town of Stanton, and then southeast on N. Dak. 200A to Fort Clark State Historic Site, where you can walk among the archaeological remains of a Mandan earth-lodge village and of the fort itself, a major fur-trading post built in 1831. From here, head south via N. Dak. 48 and N. Dak. 25 and then east on I-94, following signs to Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park (see Highlights). Lt. Colonel George Custer once lived here, and it was from Fort Abraham that he made his final journey to fight the Sioux and Cheyenne at the Battle of Little Big Horn. Drive south on N. Dak. 1806 (the year of the explorers' return journey from the Pacific) entering South Dakota. At Mobridge, you can see the grave of Sitting Bull, the victor of Little Big Horn who was shot and killed in 1890. Another marker here honors Sacagawea. Follow N. Dak. 1804 north, then cross back to North Dakota, Take U.S. 83 north through Strasburg, stopping off at the Welk Homestead, the birthplace of the famous band leader, before returning to Bismarck.

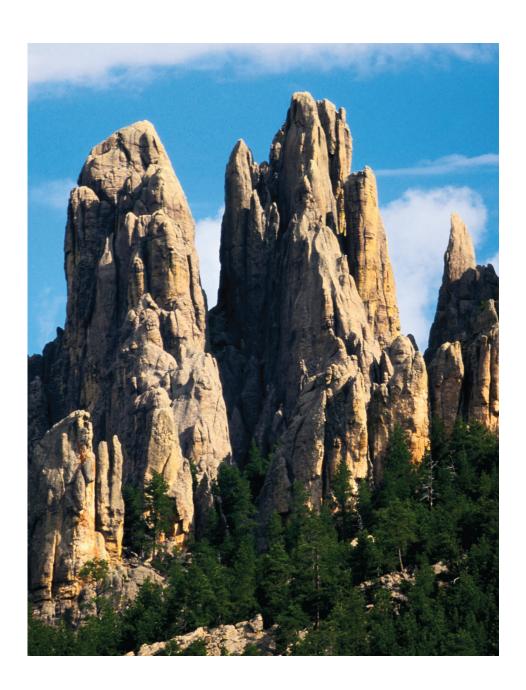
FROM: Loop route from Bismarck,
North Dakota
ROADS: N. Dak. 1804, 200A, U.S. 83,
N. Dak. 200, Country Road 37, N. Dak. 48,
25, I-94, N. Dak. 1800
DISTANCE: 400 miles (644 km)
DRIVING TIME: 7 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall
PLANNING: Ewisandclarktrail.com

| HIGHLIGHTS |

For thousands of years, Native Americans lived, hunted, and gathered food in the region of Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site. The visitor-center displays, traditional earth lodge, and walking tour to two Hiddsta village sites are evocative of what their lives were like.

Among the many attractions at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park are the reconstructed Mandan Indian village of On-A-Slant, and, on Cavalry Square, the re-created Commanding Officer's Headquarters once inhabited by General Custer.

DRIVING THROUGH HISTORY | 247



SOUTH DAKOTA

BLACK HILLS

The high ridges and deep caverns of the isolated Black Hills are sacred to the Lakota, and have long been rich in gold and history. This drive takes in mines and gold-rush towns, living and prehistoric wildlife, stunning rock formations, and monumental carvings.



Crazy Horse Memorial in the Black Hills was begun in 1948 and is still to be completed.

n Rapid City, on the eastern edge of the Black Hills, visit the Museum of Geology to understand the ancient processes that shaped the mountain range. Then take I-90 (U.S. 14) northwest past the Black Hills National Cemetery to Sturgis—home to the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame. East of town, on S. Dak. 34, is Fort Meade Museum, established after the Battle of Little Big Horn as a frontier post. Double back and take I-90 to Spearfish for the D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery, built in 1896 to introduce trout to the area. Head south on U.S. Alt. 14—the colorful Spearfish Canyon Scenic By way - to the gold-rush town of Lead, where you can learn about the history of gold mining at Black and the property of thHills Mining Museum and the nearby Homestake Mine. Farther on is the casino town of Deadwood, whose Adams Museum tells the stories of the town's famous residents, including "Wild Bill" Hickok, $who \ was \ killed \ in 1876 \ while \ playing \ poker \ at \ Saloon \ No. \ 10. \ Pan \ for \ gold \ at \ the \ Broken \ Boot \ Gold \ Mine$ in town before heading south on U.S. 385 to Crazy Horse Memorial, a work in progress that dwarfs the nearby faces on Mount Rushmore. Then take S. Dak. 89 south and U.S. 18 east to Hot Springs' Mammoth Site, where the skeletons of Columbian and woolly mammoths have been found. From here, head north on U.S. 385 to Wind Cave National Park, one of the world's most complex cave systems. Continue north on Needles Highway (S. Dak. 87) through needle-like granite formations and take U.S. Alt. 16 to the restaurants and curio shops of Keystone. Farther north, on U.S. 16, you reach Bear Country U.S.A., a drive-through wildlife park where you are restricted to your car as about 100 grizzly and black bears roam free. From here, return to Rapid City.

EXCURSION From Keystone, a short detour on S. Dak. 244 brings you to one of America's most famous monuments—the sculpted heads of Mount Rushmore. Between 1927 and 1941, the faces of Presidents Washington, Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Lincoln were blasted and carved out of the rock face—450,000 tons (408,000 t) of rock were removed in the process. The mountain is lit up during summer evenings, and can be viewed complete with a talk, film, and singing of the national anthem.

OPPOSITE: Granite needle-like formations run alongside Needles Highway in Custer State Park, South Dakota.

HIGHLIGHTS |

Packed with spectacular formations of sparkling crystals, **Jewel Cave National Monument**, near Crazy Horse Memorial, is the second longest explored cave system in the U.S.

In **Custer State Park**, adjacent to Wind Cave National Park, you can see free-roaming bison, deer, antelope, and mountain lions.

Reptile Gardens, five minutes north of Bear Country U.S.A., is the perfect roadside attraction for kids, with a multitude of slithering creatures from alligators to boa constrictors.

FROM: Loop route from Rapid City, South Dakota ROADS: I-90 (U.S. 14), S. Dak. 34, U.S. Alt. 14, U.S. 385, S. Dak. 89, U.S. 18, S. Dak 87, U.S. Alt. 16, U.S. 16

DISTANCE: 258 miles (415 km)
DRIVING TIME: 6 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING:
blackhillsbadlands.com



DINOSAUR DIAMOND LOOP

Red-rock canyons, extraordinary geological formations, and cottonwood-lined rivers flowing through arid, high-plains terrain delight the eye at every turn on this drive. But the real stars are the dinosaur fossils and footprints you'll see in museums along the way.

he prehistoric "thunder lizards" give their name to the town of Dinosaur. Head west out of town on U.S. 40, stopping a few miles later in Jensen at Quarry Exhibit Hall to see thousands of dinosaur fossils, then drive on to Vernal to visit the Dinosaur Garden at the Utah Field House of Natural History State Park Museum, which has 18 life-size dinosaur models, including Utahraptor, a huge predator discovered in 1991. The route passes through Ashlev National Forest, as U.S. 191 heads west and south into Indian Canyon. Cliffs rise steeply beside the conifer-flanked road as it climbs to $the\,9,\!100\text{-}foot\,(2,\!773\,m)\,Indian\,Creek\,Pass\,and\,then\,drops\,down\,to\,the\,small\,town\,of\,Helper.\,Follow\,the\,Allowed Foundation and Comparison of Comparison (Comparison (Comparison of Comparison (Comparison (Com$ $Price\ River\ to\ Price, stopping\ to\ visit\ the\ College\ of\ Eastern\ Utah\ Prehistoric\ Museum,\ then\ drive\ south-leaving\ to\ Prehistoric\ Museum,\ then\ drive\ south-leaving\ Rehistoric\ Museum,\ then\ drive\ south-leaving\ Rehistoric\$ east for 60 miles (96 km) through rolling terrain to join I-70. Turn off south on U.S. 191 once more, toward $Moab. \, After 16\,miles (26\,km), take \, a \, short \, detour \, right \, along \, a \, dirt \, road \, (impassable \, after \, rain) \, to \, explore \, and \, respectively. \, After \, 16\,miles \, (26\,km)$ the fossils of the Mill Canyon Dinosaur Tracksite. Just before Moab is the turning to Arches National $\,$ Park. Leave your car for a few hours to view the rock formations that have made this region famous. Back on the road in Moab, pick up the Colorado River Scenic Byway (Utah 128) and after crossing the state line, stop in Fruita to visit the Dinosaur Journey Museum. From Fruita, detour into Colorado $National\,Monument, famous\,for\,gorges\,and\,monoliths, and\,enjoy\,panoramic\,views\,from\,the\,overlooks$ on the 23-mile (37 km) Rim Rock Drive. Return to Dinosaur north along Colo. 139 and 64, climbing to the 8,240-foot (2510 m) Douglas Pass and through Canyon Pintado National Historic District—a "painted canyon" with at least 200 Native American pictographs and petroglyphs.

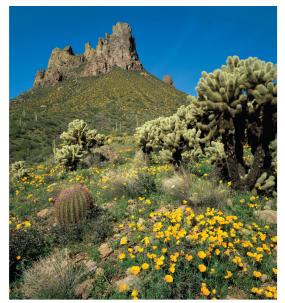
EXCURSION To visit the Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, the world's richest collection of Jurassic-era dinosaur bones, leave Price and head south on Utah 10 for 12 miles (19 km) to Utah 155. Turn east to Elmo, then follow the signs. More than 12,000 bones and one dinosaur egg have been excavated so far, with more still in the ground. The visitor center has a complete skeleton of the carnivorous Allosaurus, one of the largest flesh-eaters of the Jurassic period, and a Steposaur wall mount.



FROM: Loop route from Dinosaur, Colorado Roans. US. 40, 191, 6, 1-70, Utah 128/Colorado River Scenic Byway. Colo. 139, 64 DISTANCE: 480 miles (770 km) DRIVING TIME: 10 hours WHEN TO GO: Spring through fall PLANNING: Some side trips are on unpaved roads that can be impassable after rain or snow. colorado.com/cities-and-towns/dinosaur

Paleontologists carefully chip away rock, uncovering dinosaur fossils at Dinosaur Quarry





Cacti and spring flowers flourish in the canyons of the Superstition Mountains

ARIZONA I

APACHE TRAIL

Shadowing the ancient footpaths of the Apache Indians, this partly unpaved route gives dazzling views as it skirts the craggy Superstition Mountains just east of Phoenix, plunges into the sheer rock canyons of the Salt River, and encounters blue desert lakes.

o traverse the stunning Superstition Mountains in the footsteps of Native Americans and pioneers, begin in Apache Junction and take Ariz. 88 north past Goldfield Ghost Town (see Highlights) to begin the climb into the mountains. According to legend, Jacob "The Dutchman"Waltz discovered a mine and hid a cache of gold here in the 1870s. Gold-seekers can detour to the 4,553 $foot \, (1,387\, m)\, We aver's\, Needle, a\, volcanic\, plug\, visible\, to\, the\, north.\, Inside\, the\, vast\, Tonto\, National\, Forest,$ the road curves past saguaro cacti up to a view of Canyon Lake, azure blue against a desertscape of steep, $brown\ cliffs.\ The\ road\ winds\ around\ the\ lake\ for\ several\ miles,\ climbs\ again,\ and\ descends\ into\ Tortilla$ Flat, an old stagecoach stop and the trail's only town. The ramshackle stores are right out of a Hollywood set—the bar has saddles for seats and prickly pear ice cream. Beyond Mesquite Flat, the dirt road begins heading to Fish Creek Hill, the main attraction of the drive. A short trail leads cliffside for panoramic $views \, of \, sheer-walled \, Fish \, Creek \, Canyon. \, From \, here, the \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, descends \, precipitously, dropping \, 800 \, feet \, road \, r$ $(242~\mathrm{m})$ in the next mile $(1.6~\mathrm{km})$ with sharp switchbacks barely wider than your car. Cross Fish Creek along a single-lane bridge, then follow the creek and other small streams until the road descends to views of Apache Lake and the desert rock face known as the Painted Cliffs of the Mazatzal Mountains. For the last 10 miles (16 km), the road snakes along Apache Lake, pushing between tall hills past the Burnt Corral Recreation Site to Theodore Roosevelt Dam (see Highlights). Continue to your journey's end at $Tonto\ National\ Monument\ to\ see\ the\ cliff\ dwellings\ of\ the\ prehistoric\ Salado\ people\ (see\ Highlights).$

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Goldfield bills itself as a ghost town, but has found new life as a tourist attraction. Enjoy a narrated ride on the 1.5-mile (2.4 km) Superstition Scenic Railway, a replica of Mammoth Mine, two museums, horseback riding, restaurants, and saloons.

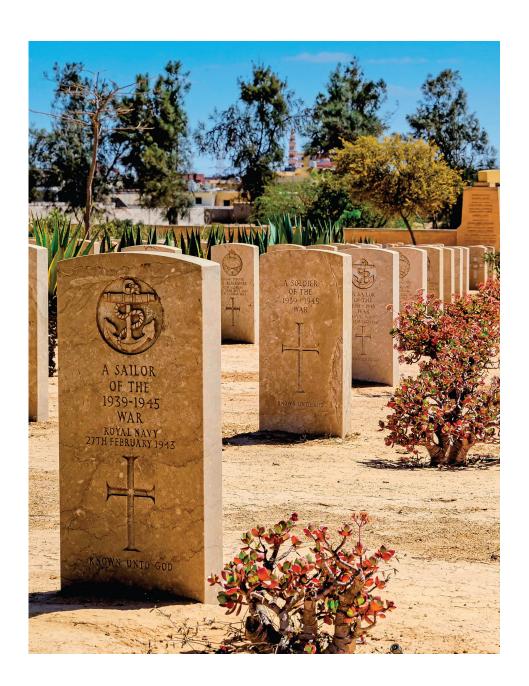
Visit the Roosevelt Dam Visitor
Center to learn how the area's four lakes were created in the early 20th century. The observation deck has excellent lake views.

The Salado people lived in the well-protected caves about the Tonto Basin. The visitor center at Tonto National Monument tells their stoy. a hiding the sides you up to the lower dwellings, where you can see 20 well-preserved rooms. The upper dwellings are even more spectacular. To take the three-hour round-trip hike there, you'll need to book ahead.

FROM: Apache Junction, Arizona
TO: Tonto National Monument,
Arizona
ROAD: Ariz. 88
DISTANCE: 46 miles (74 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Fall through
spring
PLANNING: Best in dry weather
as much of the road is unpaved.



DRIVING THROUGH HISTORY | 251



THE TOP

1 AMERICAN MILITARY LEGENDS, PENNSYLVANIA/NEW JERSEY/ MARYLAND

Three of the most significant events of U.S. military history are the nexus of a drive from Philadelphia to Baltimore that includes the Valley Forge encampment where George Washington and the Continental Army braved the winter of 1777-78, the Gettysburg Battlefield, which turned the tide of the Civil War, and Fort McHenry, where "The Star Spangled Banner" was born during the War of 1812.

PLANNING: Special activities are organized at Gettysburg during the July 1-3 battle anniversary. nps.gov/gett

2 ALONG THE WESTERN FRONT, FRANCE/BELGIUM

The drive starts at Waterloo, where Napoleon was vanquished in 1814, and continues along the Somme, where a bloody 1916 battle helped introduce the tank and airplane to modern warfare. English longbows were the decisive weapon at nearby Agincourt in 1415, while a ragtag flotilla expedited the miraculous British escape at Dunklet in 1820.

PLANNING: World War I is the focus of the Remembrance Trail between Albert and Péronne visit-somme.com/great-war/remembrance-trail

3 LIBERATION VIA THE ANDES, ARGENTINA/CHILE

Taking the Spanish by surprise, José de San Martin marched his rebels across the Andes in 1817 to liberate Chile. Starting from Mendoza, Argentina, this 200-mile (300 km) drive traces their route up the Rio Mendoza to Uspallata Pass and onward to Chacabuco Battlefield on the outskirts of Santiago, Chile.

PLANNING: welcometomendoza.com

4 OKINAWA'S "TYPHOON OF

STEEL," JAPAN

Relics of the last great battle of World War II are scattered along a 15-mile (24 km) drive between Naha city and the south coast of Okinawa island. Among the highlights are the Sugar Loaf Hill battle site, Japanese Navy Underground Head-quarters, Himeyuri Peace Museum, and poignant Peace Memorial Park.

10

BATTLEFIELD DRIVES

From war elephants crossing the Alps to heavy artillery in World War II North Africa, there are plenty of ways to drive your way around military history.

PLANNING: Tomari International Cemetery in Naha includes the graves of five American sailors who died during Commodore Perry's 1854 visit. visitokinawa.jp

5 HANNIBAL'S MARCH ACROSS THE ALPS

Follow Hannibal's 3rd-century a.c. invasion route on this 900-mile (1440 km) road trip between Cartagena, Spain, and Turin, Italy. After crossing the Rhone River in southern France, the drive traverses the Alps via the Col du Montgenévre, one of the likely paths that Hannibal and his elephants took through the mountains.

PLANNING: The Battle of Trebia, one of Hannibal's biggest victories over the Romans, is marked by a war elephant monument near Rivalta-Trebbia village. rivalta-trebbia.it/elefante-di-tuna

6 TEXAS WAR OF INDEPENDENCE, TEXAS

Like General Santa Anna's 1836 march across Texas, this drive starts at the Alamo in San Antonic, where Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and around 200 other rebels were dispatched by Mexican troops. About an hour's drive to the east, Gonzalez was the venue of fabled wartime events like the Runaway Scrape and "Come and take it" incident. The drive continues through Houston to San Jacinto Battlefield, where Santa Anna surrendered to Sam Houston and the Texan Army.

OPPOSITE: Thousands who died in the Battle of El Alamein are buried in the Commonwealth War Cemetery, El Alamein, Egypt. PLANNING: Next to the Alamo, the Menger Bar is where Teddy Roosevelt recruited Rough Riders for the Spanish-American War, thealamo.org

7 EGYPT'S COASTAL CLASHES

A 90-mile (150 km) drive along Egypt's Mediterranean coast connects two of the storied clashes of North African history—the 1798 Battle of the Nile (Aboukir Bay) between a British fleet under Horatio Nelson and Napoleon's French armada, and the 1942 Battles of El Alamein, during which British Commonwealth forces defeated Rommel's wainted Afrika Koros.

PLANNING: Lying halfway between Aboukir Bay and El Alamein, Alexandria makes a perfect base for exploring these battle sites. egypt.travel

8 MEDIEVAL TURNING POINTS, FRANCE

Two of the turning points in French history—the 8th-century Battle of Tours, which blunted the Muslim invasion of Western Europe and the 15th-century Siege of Orléans, which elevated Joan of Arc to hero status—provide the historic bookends for this 77-mile (125 km) cruise down the Loire Valley.

PLANNING: Drive riverside D951 and D952, past famous chateaus like Chambord, Blois, and Amboise. *loirevalley-france.co.uk*

9 PERSIAN INVASIONS, GREECE

Starting from Thessaloniki, this 360-mile (575 km) drive down the Aegean coast includes three of the epic battles between ancient Greek and Persian forces: Thermopylae (480 a.c.), Marathonas (490 a.c.), and Salamis (480 a.c.).

PLANNING: Alexander the Great was born and raised in Pella, a 45-minute drive west of Thessalonica. visitareece.ar

10 SOUTH AFRICAN CLASHES

British imperialism sparked two very different conflicts in southern Africa. Battlefields at Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift near Durban recall the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. An eight-hour drive to the west, the Magersfontein Battlefield Museum near Kimberley details an 1899 British defeat during the Second Boer War.

PLANNING: Zulu Safaris in Durban offers a oneday tour of the KwaZulu Natal battlefields, which includes museums and memorials. zulusafaris.com

ROUTE 66

Running from Chicago, Illinois, to Santa Monica, California, Route 66 was inaugurated in 1926. On this stretch of the road, vintage diners and motels oozing fabulous fifties-era dazzle still lure today's motorists.

mmortalized in song and story, much of Route 66 has been replaced by other highways, but you can still drive parts of it. Begin at the almost abandoned town of Glenrio on the Texas/New Mexico state line, and follow the original Route 66 west along 1-40.

After 40 miles (64 km) of arid grassland, you reach Tucumcari, a fifties time capsule. Exit the interstate at the agricultural town of Moriarty, taking N. Mex. 333 west to Albuquerque, whose Central Avenue retains many buildings from Route 66's heyday, such as the 1927 Pueblo-style KiMo Theatre. From here, take I-40 west to the Native American pueblo of Laguna, and then follow N. Mex. 122 and 118 to Arizona. Rejoin I-40 at the state border, before detouring through the historic frontier town of Holbrook on I-40, to view the Wigwam Motel, with its 16 concrete "wigwam" rooms. Before Flagstaff, southern gateway to the Grand Canyon (see Excursion), leave I-40 and take U.S. 180/Historic Rte. 66 past vintage motels into the town. Rejoin the interstate and head west. The road drops through ponderosa pine forest into a drier landscape. Just beyond Ash Fork, leave the interstate for the longest remaining stretch of the original Route 66. The old railroad town of Seigman is the first of many small settlements that preserve the 1950s atmosphere with nostalgic motels, drive-ins, and shops, You'll then cross increasingly desert-like terrain on the way to Kingman, home of the Historic Route 66 Museum. From here, cross the Sitgreaves Pass to Western-themed Oatman, with mock gunfights and semi-tame burros wandering the streets. It's real desert territory now as you wind down to rejoin I-40 and the Colorado River at Topock.

EXCURSION From Flagstaff, take U.S. 180 north to reach the **Grand Canyon's** South Rim, about two hours away. The 277-mile (446 km) long canyon is more than a mile (1,800 m) deep and was formed by the Colorado River cutting through the red rock. Like Route 66, the canyon is an American icon. Hike or stroll the path along the rim, or simply admire the spectacular view. The adventurous can ride a mule to the bottom. Seeing the canyon at dawn or sunset is an experience not to be missed.



FROM: Glenrio, New Mexico
To: Topock, Arizona
ROADS: I-40, N. Mex. 333, 122,
118, U.S. 180/Historic Rte. 66
DISTANCE: 733 miles (1/180 km)
DRIVING TIME: 10 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Old Route 66 does
not appear on current road
maps but is signposted off I-40.
historic66.com

Just another roadside attraction on Route 66, this diner's neon lights draw in drivers tempted by classic American food.





Small fishing boats bring an extra splash to the color of an iridescent river near Ocho Rios in Jamaica.

JAMAICA

JAMAICA'S PIRATE PAST

Follow in the footsteps of the real-life pirates of the Caribbean who sailed the seas in search of Spanish plunder. This route takes in old buccaneer sites, green savannas, sugarcane fields, and mountains, all with the azure Caribbean in the distance.

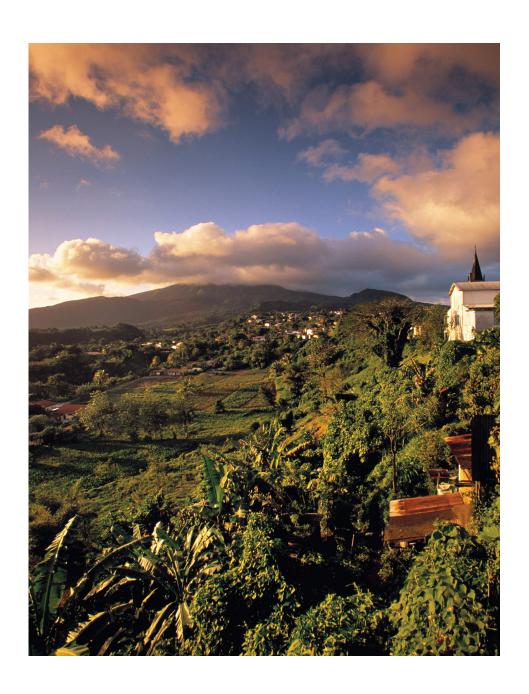
egin in Port Royal, formerly known as the "wickedest city in Christendom" before it was destroyed by an earthquake in 1692, along with its thousands of resident pirates, prostitutes, and pieces of eight. What remains of Port Royal, now a quiet fishing town, lies at the tip of a 9-mile (14 km) breakwater road called the Palisadoes. Built in 1725, St. Peter's Church holds a silver Communion service said to have been donated by legendary pirate Captain Henry Morgan. Beyond the church, crenellated Fort Charles looks much as it did before the earthquake, despite having sunk 3 feet (1 m). From Port Royal, head along the Palisadoes to the modern-day capital city, Kingston. Heading west along highway A1, you pass Bob Marley's former home (now a museum) and come to Spanish Town, where the Georgian main square includes the remains of the 19th-century Old Courthouse. Continue west along A2 to reach the town of Negril, then head north and enjoy a drink in the exclusive Round Hill resort, with incredible views along the coast. From here, it's a stunning 63-mile (102 km) drive along the north coast on A1 through Montego Bay to Ocho Rios, where Dunn's River Falls drop 900 feet (274 m) through terraces and lagoons. On the same road, now called A3, just outside Port Maria stands Firefly, the estate of British playwright Noël Coward, near the "pirate cabin" once used as a lookout by Captain Morgan. Continue on the coastal road (now A4) past Port Antonio, skirting $the \ Blue \ Mountains. \ Stop \ at the seaside \ village \ of \ Boston \ Bay \ for some \ authentic \ jerk \ pork. \ From \ here,$ head around the island's eastern tip and back toward Kingston.

FROM: Loop route from Port Royal, Jamaica, to nearby Kingston ROADS: A1, A2, A3, A4 DISTANCE: 380 miles (612 km)

DRIVING TIME: 6 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Road conditions
vary, so allow yourself plenty
of time. visitjamaica.com



DRIVING THROUGH HISTORY | 255



MARTINIQUE I

IN THE SHADOW OF THE VOLCANO

 $Beauty\ and\ the\ reminders\ of\ tragedy\ await\ on\ this\ drive\ through\ a\ Caribbean\ paradise.$ $Martinique's \ tropical \ profusion \ is \ on \ display \ in \ the \ Jardin \ de \ Balata \ and \ in \ the \ untamed \ rain-partinique's \ tropical \ profusion \ is \ on \ display \ in \ the \ Jardin \ de \ Balata \ and \ in \ the \ untamed \ rain-partinique's \ tropical \ profusion \ is \ on \ display \ in \ the \ Jardin \ de \ Balata \ and \ in \ the \ untamed \ rain-partinique's \ tropical \ profusion \ is \ on \ display \ in \ the \ Jardin \ de \ Balata \ and \ in \ the \ untamed \ rain-partinique's \ tropical \ profusion \ is \ on \ display \ in \ the \ Jardin \ de \ Balata \ and \ in \ the \ untamed \ rain-partinique's \ tropical \ profusion \ is \ on \ display \ in \ the \ Jardin \ de \ Balata \ and \ in \ the \ untamed \ rain-partinique's \ tropical \ profusion \ in \ the \ profusion \ pro$ forest, while the grim but compelling story of St.-Pierre unfurls among centuries-old ruins.



The colorful Schoelcher Library was shipped from Paris after the 1889 World's Fair

n May, 1902, Mont Pelée erupted for the first time in centuries, shaking the peaceful island of Martinique to its core and leaving only one survivor to tell the tale. Begin at Fort-de-France, whose inner-city ring road, boulevard du Général de Gaulle (Rte, N3), follows the Rivière Madame north toward Morne Rouge (see Hidden History) before climbing into the hillside suburbs. For a wonderful view over the capital, stop at the church of Sacré Coeur. The domed "Montmartre Martiniquais" was erected as a tribute to the dead of World War I. As the road winds its way upward past the Jardin de Balata (see Highlights), the air cools noticeably. Twist your way past the Pitons (peaks) flanked by 100-foot (30 m) high stands of bamboo, soft banks of fern, and rainforest. From the town of Deux Choux, $take\ Rte.\ D1\ west\ to\ St.-Pierre\ (see\ Highlights), passing\ banana\ plantations\ on\ the\ way\ to\ the\ Caribbean\ descriptions$ $coast.\ Once\ known\ as\ the\ Paris\ of\ the\ Antilles,\ St.-Pierre\ was\ a\ thriving\ port\ until\ the\ volcano\ erupted,$ sending a pyroclastic flow with temperatures reaching more than 3,700°F (2,040°C) over the city and causing the sea to boil. You can wander around the shell of the old theater, stop at the cathedral that was rebuilt behind its surviving facade, and visit the underground cell where the cataclysm's only survivor, prisoner Louis Auguste Cyparis, was being held. The Cyparis Express tourist train makes a narrated circuit (in French) around the town's ruins. Take the coastal Rte. N2 south to Anse Turin, a town that once played host to celebrated French painter Paul Gauguin (see Highlights). The road continues along the coast back to Fort-de-France, passing the village of Le Carbet, where the founder of St.-Pierre, Pierre Belain d'Esnambuc, landed and claimed the island for France in 1635.

HIDDEN HISTORY | Amateur volcanologists will be thrilled by a visit to La Maison du Volcan (closed on Monday) in Morne Rouge. Take Riv. No north from St.-Pierre to reach the small museum. As well as information on volcanism (in French), there is a 45-minute video compiled from footage of St.-Pierre before and after the 1902 eruption, vividly showcasing the destruction that befell the town; an English version is available on request.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

The **Jardin de Balata** is a tropical garden paradise laid out in a Creole home above the coast. Paths meander through orchids, fruit trees, spice bushes, and red-and-pink torch ginger.

St.-Pierre's Musée Vulcanologique, founded in 1932, has displays of photographs, melted glass bottles, fused nails, and other artifacts relating to the 1902 eruption.

Painter Paul Gauguin staved in Anse Painter Paul Gauguin stayed in Anse Turin for five months seeking the simple life. Visit the **Musée Gauguin** to see reproductions of his paintings, letters from the time he spent on the island, and exhibits of local artwork.

FROM: Loop route from Fort-de-France, Martinique ROADS: Rtes. N3. D1. N2 DISTANCE: 40 miles (65 km) **DRIVING TIME: 2 hours** WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: martinique.org



OPPOSITE: Lush tropical greenery cloaks the hillsides of the hamlet of Morne Rouge.



A PRE-COLUMBIAN TRAIL

 $Smoky\ blue\ mountains\ form\ a\ perpetual\ backdrop\ to\ this\ drive\ east\ of\ the\ regional\ capital,$ $Oax a ca, the \ original \ home \ of the \ Zapotec \ and \ Mixtec \ peoples. \ Along \ the \ way, 17 th-century$ $architecture\ mingles\ with\ pre\text{-}Columbian\ sites\ of\ great\ archaeological\ interest.$

rom sumptuous, baroque Oaxaca, head southeast on Hwy. 190 to tiny Santa María del Tule. The village's pride is its 2,000-year-old, 138-foot (42 m) wide cypress tree, which towers over the 17th $century \, church. \, After \, 10 \, minutes \, or \, so, take \, a \, right \, toward \, San \, Jer\'{o}nimo \, Tlacochahuaya, \, a \, small \, a \, contract \, contract$ Zapotec village with a picturesque plaza—the Dominican church and monastery are built on the site of a pre-Hispanic temple, which provided the building materials. Stylized vignettes of cherubs and flowers cover the interior, and its 1620 pipe organ has been meticulously restored. A little $far theron, turn \ right onto \ a \ dirt \ road \ to \ Dainz\'u, \ a \ terraced \ Zapotec \ city \ that \ was \ in hab$ ited circa 300 B.C. Stop to look at the bas-relief carvings of ball players on the remains of a step-platform structure. Next you come upon a left turn for Teotitlán del Valle, famous for its hand-loomed rugs, while in another 10 minutes you are at the ruins of Lambityeco, a salt-mining center dating back more than 1,000 years. Very soon you reach Tlacolula de Matamoros—step inside the 17th-century Iglesia del Santo Cristo to see the stunning plasterwork. Farther along, and left off the highway, is Yagul, a fortified Zapotec city set on a hill where more than 30 tombs were discovered. Soon you reach Mitla (see In Focus), your final destination.

IN FOCUS I Lying 2.5 miles (4 km) east of Hwy, 190 are the impressive **ruins of Mitla**. The Zapotec called the place Lyobaa, meaning 'place of rest' or 'burial place,' and built tombs above and below ground. The site was taken over from the Zapotec by the Mixtec around the 11th century. It consists of five groups of buildings, two of which have been excavated. The more exceptional is the Grupo de las Columnas, hewn from fine limestone and distinguished by geometric Mixtec decoration.

FROM: Oaxaca, Mexico To: Mitla, Mexico ROAD: Hwy. 190 DISTANCE: 26 miles (41 km) DRIVING TIME: 1 hour
WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Allow two hours to investigate Mitla's ruins. advantagemexico.com



I INDIA I

A SLICE OF GOA

A short drive through Goa's lush coastal strip brings a juxtaposition of spiced, colored Hindu India with the baroque colonial style of its Portuguese past, as rich temples alternate with dazzling Catholic churches and monasteries.

he city of Old Goa was the capital of Portugal's Indian empire until 1843, when the administration was moved to Goa's current capital, Panaii, Before you set off, wander Old Goa's main square overlooked by the Cathedral of St. Catherine, the Basilica of Bom Jesus, and the beautifully painted Convent and Church of St. Francis of Assisi. The last houses Goa's best museum, with a collection of sculptures and portraits of old Portuguese governors. From the now silent docks—where once more than 1,000 ships were loaded each year—drive up Holy Hill, dominated by the soar-drive up Holy Hill, dominated by Holy Hil ing 152-foot (46 m) high tower of the Church and Monastery of St. Augustine. Leaving Old Goa, head south on NH 4A, a road that twists and climbs into the hills, past cashew and jackfruit trees. In around $30\,minutes\,you\,reach\,the\,village\,of\,Priol\,and\,near by\,Ponda, where\,Hindu\,priests\,fled\,when\,Portuguese$ missionaries spearheaded the destruction of many temples. But Hinduism survived, so today there are three major temples to visit. Before Priol, Sri Mangesh Temple, with a yellow and white dome, is Goa's $most\ richly\ adorned,\ while\ Sri\ Lakshmi\ Narashimha\ Devashtan\ Temple,\ set\ in\ the\ idyllic\ woodland\ of$ $Veling a, is perhaps the most beautiful. The most popular is Sri\,Shantadurg a\,Temple\,near\,Queula, always$ busy with people buying flowers before the main puja (worship) at 1 p.m. From here, the road goes through Borim before crossing the Zuari River. After the village of Camurlim, a left detour leads to the $Patriarchal \, Siminary \, of \, Rachol, \, founded \, in \, 1574. \, Nearing \, Margao, \, you \, pass \, Catholic \, churches \, standing \, and \, churches \, standing \, churches \, church$ alongside paddy fields. You will find southern Goa's bustling yet rural main town still strongly Portuguese in feel, with plenty to explore.

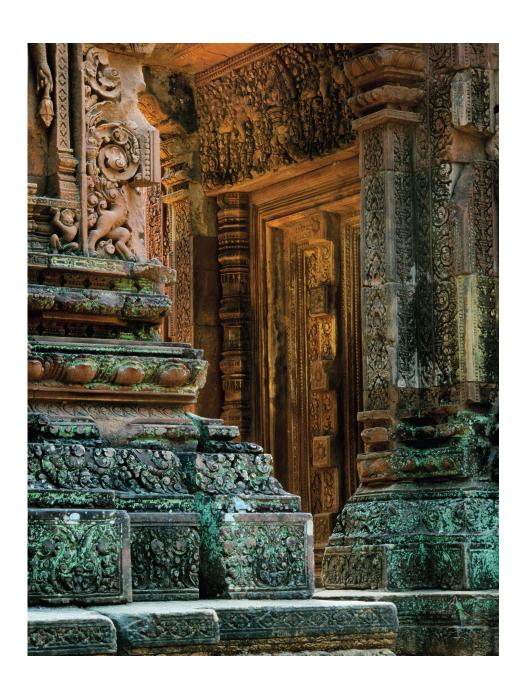
EXCURSION 1 Drive another 8 miles (13 km) east of Margao and you reach the village of Chandor. It is dominated by the magnificent follow-entury Menzes-Fraganza Mandson, an architectural jewed from Gos's clonial past. Its facade is the longest in Goa, and its interior a feast of antiques and objets d'art. The second-floor rooms are furnished with gilt mirrors, four-poster beds, and elegantly carved chairs. The ballroom has a blue-and-white painted zinc ceiling, Italian chandeliers, Bedjian mirrors, and a portrait of the mansion's builder, Anton Francesco Santana Pereira. There is no entry fee to visit.



FROM: Old Goa, India TO: Margao, India ROADS: NH 4A, local roads DISTANCE: 20 miles (32 km) DRIVING TIME: 1 hour WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: goa-tourism.com







CAMBODIA I

AROUND ANGKOR

Explore Cambodia's ancient Khmer civilization with a tour that leads from its most famous religious complex to quiet hilltop and jungle temples, and the sacred stones that sanctified Angkor's Kbal Spean River.



Angkor Wat, bathed in evening light, is reflected in the lavender-hued moat.

iem Reap, once a quiet village, is today something of a tourist hotspot, but head north and you soon pass mighty Angkor Wat (see Highlights), and the step pyramid temple of Pre Rup, consecrated in 961. Continue east on Rte. 204 to Prasat Phnom Bok, sitting atop a 700-foot (212 m) mountain, 15 miles (24 km) northeast of Siem Reap. The temple was one of three built by Yasovarman I (ruled 889–910), founder of Angkor, and has well-preserved bas-reliefs, while the ruined towers are fun to scramble around. This is a perfect place to see the sunrise. Retrace your route to Preah Dak, paying a visit to the Cambodian Handicraft Association, where villagers sell craftwork and freshly cooked palm sugar. From ancient wonders, return to the modern world by heading north on Rte. 67 and visiting the Cambodia Landmine Museum to learn about the horrific impact of these weapons on the people during the war between the Khmer Rouge and Vietnamese in the late 1970s.

Continue north through Khnar Sanday to reach Prasat Banteay Srei, one of the most popular temples in Angkor. Its name means "citadel of the women," and its elegant construction of pink sandstone and elaborate bas-reliefs make it a masterpiece of Angkorian art and architecture. Just 11 miles (ik mi) north is the Kbal Spean River, a tributary of the Siem Reap River. The Khmers of Angkor believed the water to be sacred and carved religious imagery onto the stones over which the river flowed. The carvings are found almost a mile (1.6 km) along a shady, moderately challenging trail—part of the Phnom Kulen National Park, home to 145 species of birds. Kulen Mountain was religiously important even before Angkor, and its prime attraction is the impressive waterfall, a favorite with the locals, but possibly not worthy of the entrance fee for foreigners. Retrace your route to Siem Reap.

I STAY A WHILE I Lying 5 miles (8 km) north of Siem Reap on Rte. 66A off Hwy, 6. Angkor Thom, or "The Great Capital City," centers on the state temple Bayon, built by Jayavarman VII (ruled circa 1181-1218) and dedicated to the Buddha. The temple is distinguished by its towers, into which large, smiling stone faces are carved, and bas-reliefs commemorating Jayavarman's victory over the Chams in 1181. It also offers insights into everyday Angkorian life.

OPPOSITE: Intricately carved Prasat Banteay Srei is especially appealing because of its diminutive size.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

One of the most spectacular and best-preserved Khmer temples, 12th-century **Angkor Wat** (literally, "City temple") is famed for its grandiosity and ornate decoration, most of which cannot be seen in less than three-four hours. Many people make return visits to appreciate the cite in full.

Just outside Phnom Kulen National Park, Angkor Centre for Conservation of Biodiversity is a wildlife rescue center and nature conservation area. There are free guided tours of its facility, and you may see pangolins, eagles, and porcupines.

FROM: Siem Reap, Cambodia
TO: Kbal Spean River, Cambodia
ROADS: Rtes. 204, 67
DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Buy passes to
Angkor Archaeological Park at
least the day before.



TOUR OF THE DMZ

To outsiders, Vietnam may still be more a war than a country. A guided tour through a small swathe that comprises the former demilitarized zone (DMZ) brings visitors face to face with resonant place names, landmarks, and memorials.

ong Ha, the site of a U.S. Marine combat base during the war, is the starting point for this drive that first heads north along Hwy. QLIA. Outside town, you see U.S. tanks left to rot, their guns $symbolically\ pointing\ downward, before\ reaching\ the\ Ben\ Hai\ River\ 9\ miles\ (15\ km)\ away.\ This$ was the former demarcation line between North and South Vietnam, with no-man's-land stretching for 3 miles (5 km) on either side. Memorials dot the river's edge, including the rebuilt Hien Luong Bridge. which U.S. bombers destroyed in 1967. You then backtrack to Dong Ha and turn west onto Rte. QL9. $Just \, before \, you \, reach \, Cam \, Lo-an \, American \, firebase \, during \, the \, war-a \, road \, veers \, right \, for \, Con \, Thien,$ 7.5 miles (12 km) away. In 1967, Time and Life magazines splashed images of besieged U.S. soldiers at Con Thien on their covers. Back on the main road west of Cam Lo, a trail leads to the summit of a 1,785 $foot \, (544\,m)\,hill\,known\,as\,Firebase\,Fuller, where\,U.S.\,artillery\,hurled\,shells\,as\,far\,as\,Khe\,Sanh,\,25\,miles\,Mellon,\,25\,mi$ $(40\,km)\,southwest.\,Continuing\,along\,Rte.\,QL9, a short\,road\,to\,the\,left\,leads\,to\,a\,pepper\,plantation\,that$ $was formerly \, Camp \, Carroll, the \, area's \, largest \, firebase \, with \, 22 \, artillery \, pieces. \, Farther \, on, \, Rte. \, QL9 \, veers \, artillery \, pieces \, artillery \, artillery \, pieces \, artillery \, pieces \, artillery \, a$ around a crag to the Rockpile, a 755-foot (230 m) hill that was a former observation post and artillery position. Continuing past farming villages toward the Dakrong Bridge, look out for the marker that memorializes the point where the Ho Chi Minh Trail intersected Rte. QL9. Slightly to the west lies the largest U.S. combat base in the DMZ-Khe Sanh. From January through April 1968, it was the red-hot center of the war, and is now the site of a museum.

I HIDDEN HISTORY I North of the Ben Hai River are the Vinh Moc Tunnels, one of 14 tunnel systems in the region but the only one accessible today. The 1-mile (16 km) long complex, with family spaces, conference rooms, and even a materity ward dug out of the sides of the central tunnel, was built over a 70-month period by refugues from a fishing village that had been destroyed by U.S. bombing. From December 1967 through January 1973, 90 families lived here, enduring a daily barrage of American bombing, yet not a single person lost their life, and 17 babies were born—a testament to the fortitude and resourcefulness of a besieged people. Today, a quarter mile (400 m) of the complex is open to tours.



FROM: Dong Ha, Vietnam
TO: Khe Sanh, Vietnam
ROADS: Hwy, GLTA, Rte, GLP
DISTANCE: 63 miles (102 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: A guide is essential
for this route. Some 7.000
people have been killed
or maimed by unexploded
ordnance since the end of the
war, so do not venture off the
main sites and tracks.
footprintsvietnam.com

Brilliant flags line the Hien Luong Bridge over the Ben Hai River—a memorial to Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh.







In Hué, take a cruise on the Perfume River in a rainbow-colored dragonboat.

VIETNAM

VIETNAM'S HIGHWAY ONE DRIVE

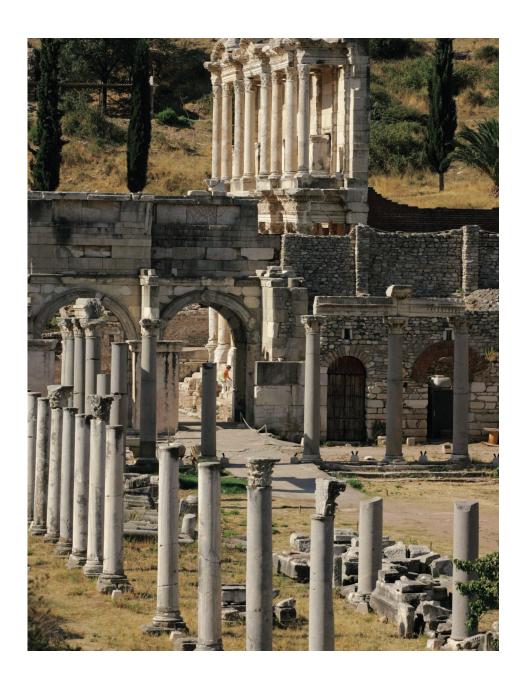
Highway I (officially, QLIA) runs nearly the entire length of Vietnam from Hanoi to the Mekong Delta. But the most intriguing drive is a 75-mile (121 km) stretch along the South China Sea between the old royal capital of Hué and the historic port city of Hoi An.

he drive along the coast between Hué, Da Nang, and Hoi An mixes many of the things that make Vietnam such an intriguing destination. Set along the Perfume River, Hué was the nation's royal capital for more than 200 years (1738-1945). The city is also renowned for the fierce battle waged there during the 1968 Tet Offensive. Largely rebuilt since the Vietnam War, Hué's enormous Citadel safeguards the Forbidden Purple City and other royal relics. On the city's southern outskirts, not far off Highway I, the royal necropolis harbors the elaborate tombs of the Nguyen dynasty emperors. The route curls around Cau Hai Lagoon to Bach Ma National Park, which protects Vietnam's largest remaining tract of coastal forest.

Highway 1 hits the coast again at Lang Co, a narrow peninsula with a jade-colored lagoon on one side and 6 miles (10 km) of beach on the other. Abundant seafood restaurants make Lang Co a great place to pause for lunch. Beyond the beach, road trippers have a choice of the modern road and tunnel through the coastal mountains or driving the old road and its many curves via Hai Van Pass. The roads converge along Da Nang Bay as Highway I rolls into the largest city along the central coast. Foodies flock to Da Nang for the famous night market. But the city is also known for its outrageous bridges: the ferocious-looking Dragon Bridge across the Han River and the new Golden "Hands of the Gods" Bridge in the Ba Na Hills. The city's Cham Museum showcases relics from My Son, an ancient temple complex tucked among the rice paddies. South of Da Nang, the Marble Mountains offer another chance to stretch your legs on trails leading to caves and Buddhist shrines. From there it's just a half-hour drive to Hoi An. A major trade center from the 15th to 19th centuries, the well-preserved old town has more than 1,000 historic buildings, many of them now filled with cafes, handicraft shops, and boutique hotels.

FROM: Hue, Vietnam
To: Hoi An, Vietnam
RoaD: Highway QL1A
DISTANCE: 75 miles (123 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Hiring a car and
driver for this route is highly
recommended.
vietnam.travel/home





TURKEY I

AZURE COAST

It is worth taking the time for this lengthy drive that uncovers the story of empire-building in Asia Minor, now modern Turkey, and leads to some of antiquity's most celebrated towns and temples scattered along the shores of the sparkling Mediterranean.



The graceful columns of Didyma's Temple of Apollo soar skyward.

n the site of Smyrna, one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the Turkish Ottoman Empire, stands modern İzmir. Many traces of the city's long history survive, but it is richest in ancient sites, such as Alexander the Great's agora (market and meeting place), rebuilt by Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius in A.D. 176. You can also visit Alexander's fortress on Kadifekale Hill, ideally at sunset. Savor the bazaar, the heart of the city, before leaving via the E881 west. Turn south onto Rte. 35-39 at Çamliçay to reach Seferihisar in around 45 minutes. A 3-mile (5 km) detour west brings you to the Greek ruins at Teos: city walls, theater, gymnasium, and a temple dedicated to Dionysos. Take the D515 south for around 50 miles (80 km) to the town of Selçuk and the ruins of Ephesus, once the second city in the Roman Empire (see Highlights). Pick up the D515 and D525 to Akköv and ancient Miletus $(now\,Milet), most famous for its\,great\,theater, built\,by\,the\,Greeks\,and\,upgraded\,by\,the\,Romans.\,Other\,Milet (Most Milet), and the property of the property o$ remains include baths, a temple to Serapis, and warehouses. Continue south for a couple of miles (3 km) to Didyma (now Didim). In ancient times, statues lined the road between Miletus and Didyma, signifying the sanctity of the route to one of ancient Greece's most sacred temples-Didyma's Temple of Apollo. Today, the sixth-century temple ruins retain much of their grandeur, with 8-foot (2.4 m) wide columns stretching 65 feet (20 m) to the sky. From here, take local roads east to Milas, and keep heading east through Muğla and Ortaca, a distance of 73 miles (118 km). At Ortaca, take local roads west for around 3 miles (5 km) through peaceful Dalyan to Kaunos, most famous for the temple tombs carved into the rocks. Head onto the D400 and turn right to Fethiye, an ancient Lycian city and present-day seaside hotspot with many sites to explore (see Highlights).

EXCURSION About a 62-mile (100 km) trip north from izmir on the D650 brings you to Bergama, the ancient city of **Pergamo**n, a center of Hellenistic culture. In addition to a laid-back atmosphere, it offers a trove of archaeological treasures, including an exquisite temple to Dionyos and the Asklepion, an ancient medical center, where the great second-century An, physician Galen worked and taught.

OPPOSITE: The Library of Celsus (at the top) is considered one of the most beautiful structures at Ephesus.

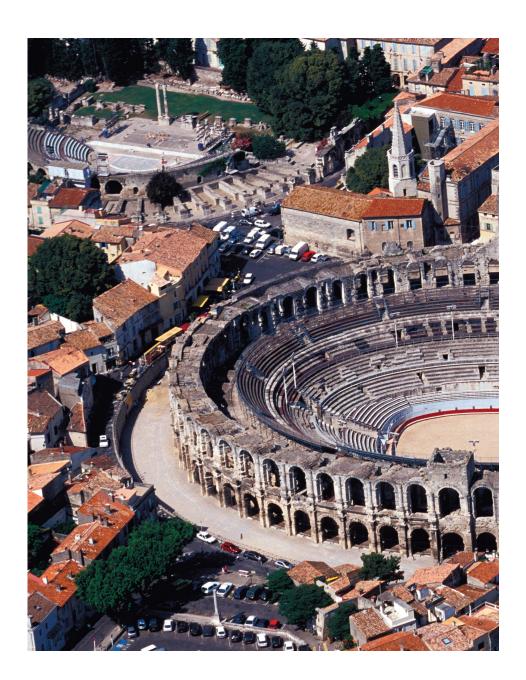
| HIGHLIGHTS |

For many years, **Ephesus** was the Roman Empire's second city. The magnificent site includes a gymnasium, theater, temple of Hadrian, and grand terraced houses. The facade of the Library of Celsus has been carefully restored, and the area also includes the Basilica of St. John. believed to sit over the apostle's tomb.

In Fethiye, visit the lonic **Tomb of Amyntas**, carved into the rock face in 350 a.c. You can also take a boat ride along the coast to **Butterfly Valley**, a splendid Mediterranean fjord that is home to southern and scarce swallowtail butterflies.

FROM: İzmir, Turkey
TO: Fethiye, Turkey
TO: Fethiye, Turkey
ROADS: E881, Rte. 35-39, D515,
D525, Iocal roads, D400
DISTANCE: 325 miles (523 km)
DRIVING TIME: 8 hours
WHEN TO 60: Year-round
PLANNING: From mid-June to
mid-July, the International Izmir
Festival of music and dance
takes place in Ephesus and
Izmir. Selçuk has an oil wrestling
festival in May and other
festivals throughout the year.
goturkeytourism.com







1 CORINTH TO EPIDAVROS, GREECE

From Corinth, head southwest to reach the remarkable ruins of ancient Corinth, dominated by the Temple of Apollo, Backtrack and continue to Mycenae. Once home to Homer's King Agamemnon, the city was the setting of many of the great classical tragedies. About an hour's drive east is Epidavros, where you'll see a remarkable ancient theater that has only recently been uncovered.

PLANNING: Bring a good translation of Homer to get in the mood. *visitgreece.gr/en*

2 PULA TO SPLIT, CROATIA

About six hours north from Pula and its giant colosseum (with room for 20,000 gladiator fans), you enter seaside Dalmatwo of Dalmatia's best-preserved archaeological sites, Greek Issa and Roman Salona. At Split's very center is Diocletian's palace, built for the third-century Roman emperor.

PLANNING: Visit Split's Museum of Croatian

3 POMPEII TO PAESTUM, ITALY

In Ap. 79, ash from Mount Vesuvius's eruption turned a city to stone. There is a lot to see at the site, just 40 minutes from Naples, but it's also worth visiting the archaeological museum in Herculaneum, which stores more fragile artifacts. From here, take the A3 to the coastal ruins at Paestum, where a basilica, forum, and the Temple of Neptune are well preserved.

PLANNING: italia.it/en/discover-italy

4 NÎMES TO ARLES, FRANCE

From Nîmes's remarkable first-century Roman gladiator ring of Les Arènes, head 12 miles (19 km) northeast to the Roman aqueduct of Pont du Gard and, to the west, Via Domitia—the original Romar road—which passes through vineyards. Continue southwest to Arles to visit the amphitheater and the Roman necropolis of Les Alvscamps

5 CARTHAGE TO DOUGA, TUNISIA

After the Romans destroyed Carthage in 146 s.c., they built from its leveled ruins

THE TOP

ANCIENT ROADS

Many ancient monuments-Native American, Greek, Roman, and ancient Japanese—are waiting to be explored by car.

great buildings, theaters, and thermal baths to make the city a suitably grand capital for Africa. Drive from Carthage back through Tunis and 80 miles (129 km) west to visit Bulla Regia, which has impressive mosaics in cool underground caves. Then head to one of ancient Rome's bestpreserved African towns, Douga.

PLANNING: Visit the Bardo Museum in Tunis which holds original pieces removed from each of the ruins. discovertunisia.com

6 KISO VALLEY, HONSHU, JAPAN

The wooded Kiso Valley was part of the old Nakasendo highway, which linked Edo (modern Tokyo) with Kyoto. Visit the valley's three well-preserved post towns-which catered for travelers' needs—abandoning your car to wander their stone-paved streets. Narai, at the northern end of the valley, marked the Nakasendo's halfway point. Tsumago and Magome both have fine examples of Honjin and Wakihonjin inns, where travelers of differing status could spend the night.

PLANNING: To experience the world described by novelist Shimazaki Toson, hike the Magome-Tsumago Trail. japan-guide.com/e/e6075.html

7 NATIVE AMERICAN SCENIC BYWAY, SOUTH DAKOTA

four reservations of the Lakota Sioux, pass

SITE: Arles's Roman amphitheater was the site of chariot races and gladiator fights, but it is now used for bullfighting. ing many sites that remain highly significant to the tribe. Sioux chief Sitting Bull is commemorated with a monument at Standing Rock, and at Cheyenne River a memorial marks the site of the Massacre at Wounded Knee, which marked the end of the Indian Wars.

PLANNING: The 300-mile (483 km) route begins in Pierre, South Dakota, and follows the Missouri River north. byways.org

8 TAOS ENCHANTED CIRCLE DRIVE, NEW MEXICO

The Taos region exhibits exhilarating natural beauty, and this 80-mile (129 km) drive affords an excellent one-day overview. Circling north and east of the town of Taos through the Carson National Forest, the drive skirts Wheeler Peak, New Mexico's highest mountain. Central to the tour is Taos Pueblo. The town has been continuously inhabited for more than 1,000 years. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a National Historic Landmark.

PLANNING: Best from late spring through fall.

9 KNIDOS TO SIDE, TURKEY

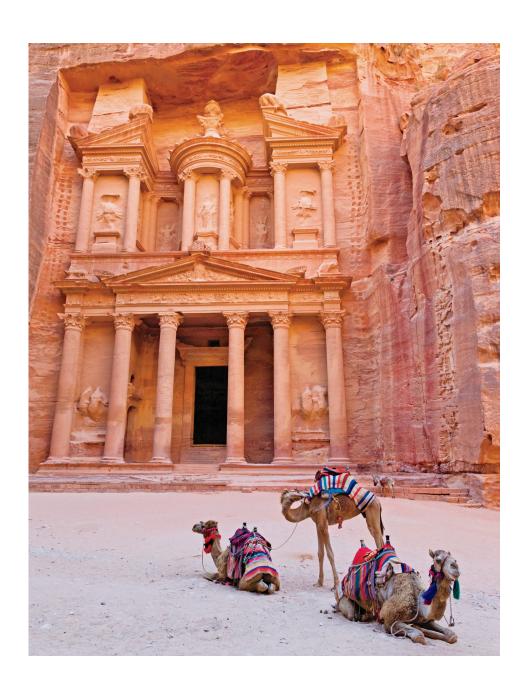
Ancient ruins and glorious coastal scenery are a perfect mix in this route along Turkey's southern coast. Start at Knidos. with its Roman theater. Kaunos has tombs cut into cliffs. Myra (Demre) has the Church of St. Nicholas of Myra, a fourth-century bishop who helped inspire the modern Santa Claus myth. Continuing east through Phaselis, Antalya, and Perga, finish in Side, with the remains of the beautiful shoreside Temple of Apollo.

PLANNING: Another way to visit these sites is to charter a *gulet*, a traditional wooden sailing boat. qoturkeytourism.com

10 SEGESTA TO SYRACUSE, SICILY, ITALY

Take a trip through Sicily's Greek remains. Near the island's western tip, admire the well-preserved Temple of Segesta. No fewer than eight temples scatter the socalled Valley of Temples near Agrigento. Crowning all is the dazzling white fifthcentury B.C. theater just north of Syracuse.

PLANNING: Late spring and early fall are the best times to visit. visitsicily.info/en



JORDAN I

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

Relic of an ancient trade route between Africa and the Middle East, Jordan's royal road meanders across the heights just east of the Dead Sea. The route connects biblical sites, crusader castles, ruined cities, and red-rock desert wilderness before reaching the Gulf of Aqaba.



The red, sun-baked sands of Wadi Rum have been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site.

obody knows for sure when the King's Highway was first trekked or even which monarch it might have been named for. But it's been around for at least 3,000 years and once crossed numerous kingdoms on its journey from Mesopotamia to the River Nile. The only portion that still bears that name runs through the highlands of Jordan between Amman and Aqaba. The Romans, Byzantines, and crusaders marched troops along the highway, and it was an early Hajj route to Mecca, while Moses and the Israelites were refused passage along the road by the King of Edom.

Amman, Jordan's rapidly growing capital, marks the northern end of the modern route. Before leaving town be sure to browse the new Jordan Museum for the archaeological lowdown on the road ahead, including the Dead Sea Scrolls and other priceless artifacts. The first hour along the King's Highway leads to Mount Nebo (see Highlights), where the Israelites got their first view of the Promised Land. Besides being a focus of religious pilgrims, the summit offers panoramic views of the Dead Sea, with Jericho and Jerusalem in the hazy distance.

Grab lunch at one of Madaba's restaurants—and pop into St George's Byzantine Church to see the famous mosaic map of Madaba—before continuing south along Highway 35. The switchbacking path through Wadi el Mujib offers sweeping views of the desert landscape, before the road rises again to Al Karak and its ruined 12th-century crusader castle. But the big prize lies farther south—the rose-red city of Petra (see Highlights). Approached through a narrow slot canyon called the Siq. Petra served as capital of the Nabataean people before its capture and expansion by Roman invaders.

South of Petra, the old road descends into the Arabian Desert and segues into modern Highway 15 (the main north-south route across Jordan). A turnoff on the left leads to Wadi Rum (see Highlights), an extraordinary red-rock wilderness also called the Valley of the Moon. T. E. Lawrence and his Arab army used the area as a staging post for their attacks on the Ottoman Turks during World War I and numerous films have been shot there, including Lawrence of Arabia. The beaches and coral reefs of Aqaba are just 30 minutes farther south, as the King's Highway reaches the shore of the Red Sea.

OPPOSITE: The facade of Al Khazneh ("The Treasury") is the most iconic of Petra's red sandstone structures

HIGHLIGHTS |

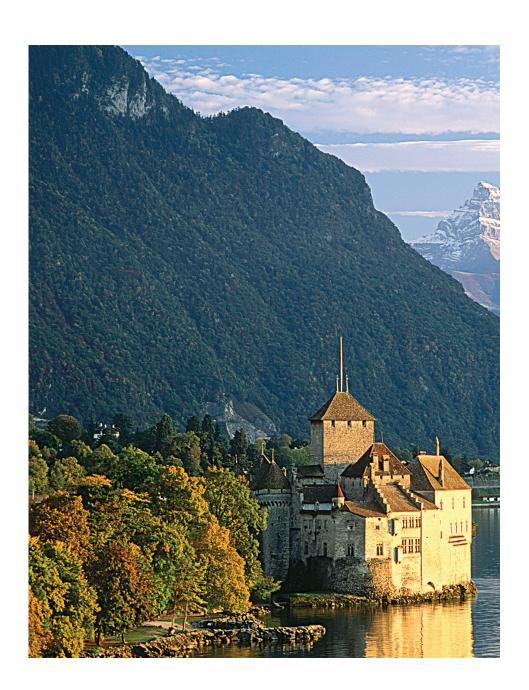
The site museum and Moses
Memorial Church on Mount Nebsafeguard some of Jordan's best
Byzantine-era mosaics.

In addition to the celebrated ruins, the Petra UNESCO World Heritage site offers horseback riding through slot canyons and hiking trails through the rocky wilderness on ancient

Rather than explore vast **Wadi Rum** on your own, arrange ahead to join a 4WD Jeep tour with stops at a Bedouin village and Lawrence of Arabia sites.

FROM: Amman, Jordan
To: Aqaba, Jordan
ROADs: Highways 35, 15, 80
DISTANCE: 276 miles (444 km)
DRIVING TIME: 8 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Time your drive to
coincide with the annual Jerash
Festival in late July and early
August-Jordan's largest arts,
entertainment, and food event.
visitjordan.com





1 TRANSYLVANIA, ROMANIA

With battlements, towers, and drawbridges, Romania's fortified churches are as impressive as any castle. A good route starts in the city of Sibiu, then loops north and east to Braşov, taking in the churches at Valea Viilor, Biertan, Saschiz, Dârjiu, Viscri, Prejmer, and Cristian. Near Braşov stands the more traditional fortification of Bran Castle, associated with the fearsome 15th-century prince, Vlad the Impaler.

PLANNING: romaniatourism.com

2 LAKE GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

The Château de Chillon at the east end of Lac Léman (Lake Geneva) is Switzerland's most visited monument. All around the lake are castles with museums and long histories. From Chillon, follow the northern (Swiss) shore west via the châteaus at Morges, Prangins (the Swiss National Museum). Nyon, and Coopet.

PLANNING: lake-geneva-region.cl

3 CASTLE ROAD, GERMANY/ CZECH REPUBLIC

This road, mapped out in the 1950s, wanders 750 miles (1,207 km) from Mannheim, Germany, to Prague in the Czech Republic, taking in some 90 sites, including palaces and manors. En route is the dramatic castle of Heidelberg, from which the road continues east through the historic region of Franconia—including the city of Bayreuth, famous for its associations with the opera composer Richard Wagner—and into the Czech Republic. It ends just outside Prague, at the fairy-tale castle of Karlštejn, dating from the 14th century.

PLANNING: burgenstrasse.de

4 ISLAND CASTLES, DENMARK

Kronborg Castle near Helsinger on the island of Sjælland (Zealand) is the Elsinore of Shakespeare's Hamlet. Nearby are the marble halls of Frederiksborg, a former royal palace. Head west to Fyn (Funen) Island for moated Egeskov, still occupied but open to the public in summer, and Holkenhavn, a Renaissance highlight where you can freely stroll the grounds.

PLANNING: All the castles are within easy reach of Copenhagen. *visitdenmark.com*

10

CASTLES

The warlike character of many castles and other fortified buildings has mellowed with time, making them a perfect destination for driving tours.

5 LOIRE VALLEY, FRANCE

A fantasy of fairy-tale châteaus, pretty towns, and glowing vineyards make the valleys of the Loire and its tributaries a perfect touring ground. From east to west, visit Chambord, Chaumont, Chenonceau, Amboise (burial place of Leonardo da Vinci), Villandry, and Saumur—any one of which could be a whole day out.

PLANNING: Many châteaus have son-et-lumière performances in summe loirevalleytourism.com

6 FEUDAL CASTLES OF JAPAN

Only 12 authentic castles survive from Japan's pre-1868 feudal era, when they were the seats of powerful regional clans. Take a tour of six in western Honshu and Shikoku, starting with Matsue near Honshu's northern coast. Head south to Bitchu Matsuyama, the oldest castle in Japan, dating to 1240. Cross the Seto-Chūō Expressway to Shikoku, where Marugame, Kochi, and Uwajima date from the 17th and 18th centuries. Finish with the imposing Matsuyama Castle.

PLANNING: Marugame is famous for its cherry blossoms in late March and early April. japan-guide.com/e/e2296.html

7 RAJASTHAN HILL FORTS, INDIA

Follow the trail of six forts along the Aravalli Range, built by various Rajput rulers from the seventh century onward. Farthest

OPPOSITE: Overshadowed by Alpine peaks on the shore of Lake Geneva, Switzerland's Château de Chillon is a romantic's paradise. east, Gagron Fort has a striking riverside position. Chittor is the largest, including palaces and a lake within its precinct. Ranthambore and beautiful Amer belonged to the maharajahs of Jaipur, and yellow sandstone Jaisalmer is the Golden Fort, rising high above the Thar Desert.

PLANNING: November through February are the best months for visiting. rajasthandirect.com/hill-forts-of-rajasthan

8 CRUSADER CASTLES, JORDAN

With a commanding mountaintop position, Jordan's Shobak Castle is the very image of a medieval castle. Built in 1115, it was attacked by the Muslim leader Saladin. Farther north, visit Karak, stronghold of the cruel Crusader lord, Reynald de Chatillon. At Oasr al-Azrac, a Muslim fort, remember T. E. Lawrence (of Arabia) and Sharif Hussein bin Ali, who based themselves there in the winter of 1917-18.

PLANNING: March through May are the best months to visit. touristiordan.com

9 CITADELS OF MONTENEGRO

Old walled towns and citadels stud Montenegro's mountainous Adriatic coast, testimony to its one-time strategic importance on the trade routes of the powerful Venetian Republic. In walled Herceg Novi, admire the Venetian-built Forte Mare. Kotor's fortifications include intact sea bastions and the Venetian Citadel of San Giovanni. Continue south through walled Budva, past the hillitop Haj Nehaj Fortress to Ulcini, whose walled old town is surrounded on three sides by the Adriatic.

PLANNING: Near Kotor, take a boat out to the stunning Our Lady of the Rocks church.

10 NORTHUMBERLAND, ENGLAND

Northumberland was once a frontier zone between England and Scotland. Remember that as you tour its most beautiful castles, starting with Warkworth. Farther north, Alnwick has been the seat of the Percy family for more than 700 years. Climb Liliburn Tower at Dunstanburgh for gorgeous views, then continue north through Bamburgh, Lindisfarne, Berwickupon-Tweed, and Norham Castle

PLANNING: visitnorthumberland.com

IN THE JULIAN ALPS

A winding road in northwestern Slovenia combines the magnificent scenery of the Triglav National Park with the memory of some of the deadliest battles of World War I. Along the way, there is ample opportunity for exploration and water sports.

tarting in the tourist town of Kranjska Gora, on the northern foothills of the Julian Alps, follow Rte. 206 as it winds along 24 numbered switchbacks to the highest mountain pass in Slovenia, Vršič (5,285 feet/l,611 m), whose history is paved with Russian blood. The Russian Chapel (hidden in the forest off the eighth switchback) commemorates hundreds of prisoners of war who died in 1915–16 while forced to construct the road by the Austrian army. Take a break at Vršič, surrounded by the highest Slovenian mountains, including Mount Triglav (9,396 feet/2,864 m). The road snakes for 7 miles (11 km) down the mountainside toward the village of Trenta. It was one of the bases for the writer Julius Kugy, who in the mid-20th century wrote several books about the Julian Alps. Today, Trenta is the gateway for exploring the spectacular upper valley of the Soča River.

After Trenta, don't miss the opportunities for a stop along the Soča for a stroll or even rafting and white-water kayaking. In Bovec, turn left on Rte. 203. Now the year-round recreational outdoor center of the Soča Valley, the mountains around Bovec marked the beginning of the Isonzo Front, extending S5 miles (88 km) along the mountain ridge to the Adriatic Sea. In World War I, the armies of Austria-Hungary and Italy fought along the Isonzo River in what is considered the biggest mountain battle in history, with an estimated of 1.2 million lives lost. The 12 successive battles are well documented at the award-winning museum in Kobarid, 14 miles (23 km) south of Bovec. Here you will also find the 3-mile (5 km) Kobarid Historic Trail, with a World War I museum, Roman settlement, and other historic sites. From Kobarid, take Rte. 102 and continue about 13 miles (21 km) to Most na Soči, where you can take a well-deserved ride in a boat on the artificial lake on the Soča, set under towering peaks.

I UNEXPECTED PLEASURE I Some 8 miles (13 km) west of Kobarid, you can swim in the Nadiža River. Virtually in the middle of a forest, the water is unexpectedly warm for this high, rugged environment. To reach it, take the 10/2/60/20ft, pass Podbela and continue for about a mile (1.6 km). You will not be alone, but likewise won't encounter crowds.



FROM: Kranjska Gora, Slovenia TO: Most na Soči, Slovenia ROADS: Rtes. 206, 203, 102 DISTANCE: 54 miles (87 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 hours WHEN TO GO: April through October

PLANNING: Avoid driving on Sundays and during holidays when traffic is heavy. There is likely to be snow on Yršić even in late spring and early fall. slovenia.info







No expense was spared in revamping the castle of Hluboká nad Vltavou in rampant neo-Gothic style.

CZECH REPUBLIC

LAND OF CASTLES

Castles of all shapes and sizes are scattered over southern Bohemia: strongholds guarding small towns; fortresses buried in the countryside watching over crucial trade routes; and rural aristocratic retreats, expressions of wealth, taste, and power.

rom České Budějovice, a delightful town of baroque, Gothic, and Renaissance architecture, head north on Rte. 105 for about 5 miles (8 km) to the lofty castle of Hluboká nad Vltavou (see Highlights). This fantasy home of the Schwarzenberg family has many attractions, not least an excellent picture collection. Continue north for 15 miles (24 km) to Týn nad Vltavou, then take Rte. $159\ toward\ Albrechtice\ nad\ Vltavou.\ Minor\ roads\ bring\ you\ 21\ miles\ (34\ km)\ to\ Zvíkov,\ a\ remote\ 13th-proof (34\ km)\ to\ Zvíkov,\ a\ remot$ century castle set on a wooded bluff above the Vltava and Otava Rivers (see Highlights), Follow the Vltava north to Orlík Castle, another Schwarzenberg neo-Gothic confection in a serene setting by a reservoir. Return south, then go west through Mirotice to Blatná, which has a splendid moated castle with a bizarre set of furniture made from antlers. Head east on Rte. 20, then take Rte. 123 south for 33 miles (52 km) to Vimperk, where a restyled 13th-century castle sits on a crag towering over the landscape. It can only be reached by a steep path up from the main square but offers inspiring views. Head east toward České Budějovice for 22 miles (35 km) to Kratochvíle, a charming Renaissance chateau, then turn south on Rtes. 122/166/39 to Český Krumlov and continue on Rte. 160 to the village and castle of Rožmberk, overlooking the winding River Vltava. The building resembles a succession of fortresses on a ridge—the finest room is the banqueting hall, covered in 16th-century frescoes. Return to Český Krumlov and take Rtes. 39 and 3 northeast to České Budějovice. Leave town on Rte. 3, turning right onto Rte. 23, then north at Kardašova Řečice toward Deštná. Watch for signs to Červená Lhota (see Highlights), an aristocratic retreat and the end of the drive.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

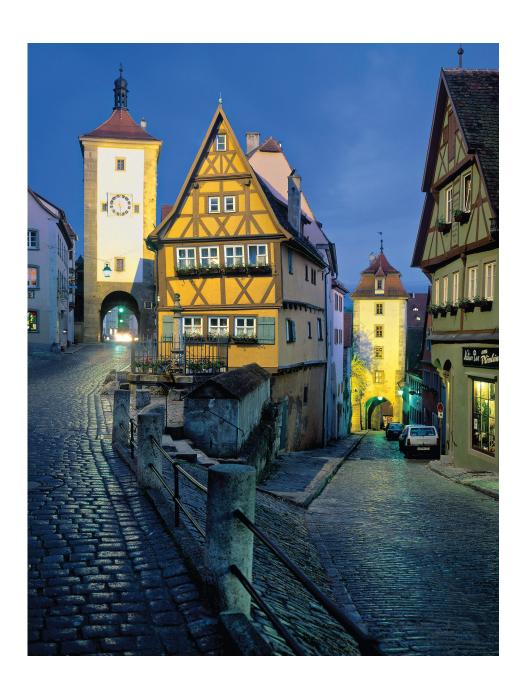
An architectural romp, **Hluboká nad Vltavou**, built in 1662 and extensively refurbished two centuries later, is packed with crenellated towers and fearsome defenses to protect the Schwarzenberg owners from—no one. It has a sumptuously furnished interior and a handsome park.

Medieval in origin, **Zvikov Castle** was partly rebuilt after being damaged during the Thirty Years War. Yet it retains a formidable 13th-century round tower, Gothic cloisters, and lovely—though restored—16th-century frescoes.

Most exquisite of all the castles is **Červená Lhota**, a l'oth-century rust-red manor house sitting on an islet in a lake and reached by a cobbled causeway. It is all the more impressive for its lack of pretension or flashbenges.

FROM: Ĉeské Budějovice, Czech Republic To: Ĉervená Lhota, Czech Republic ROADS: Rtes. 105, 159, 20, 123, 122, 166, 39, 160, 39, 3, 23 DISTANCE: 233 miles (375 km) DRIVING TIME: 7 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round, although the castles are often closed during the winter months.





| GERMANY |

THE ROMANTIC ROAD

Enter a fairy-tale world of ancient palaces and castles, walled towns and cities, and natural wonders as you follow the fabled Romantische Strasse (Romantic Road) through the southern German states of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg.



Romantic writers and artists in the 19th century loved the age-old charm of Rothenburg ob der Tauber

he baroque splendors of Würzburg's Residenz-the palace of the prince-bishops who ruled the city until 1808—offer a lavish starting point for the tour. Let your jaw drop as you stand on the grand central staircase and look upward at the world's largest ceiling painting, created by the 18th-century Venetian artist Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. After that, it's time to head southwest out of the city, taking the signposted route to the medieval wine village of Tauberbischofsheim. From here, follow the Tauber River upstream to the spa town of Bad Mergentheim, whose attractions include the Renaissance palace of the Grand Masters of the Order of Teutonic Knights. Next comes Weikersheim, with a moated castle, then Creglingen, whose Herrgottskirche (Lord God's Church) is famous for its altarpiece of the Virgin Mary carved in linden wood. Rothenburg ob der Tauber's ring of medieval ramparts shelters a medieval townscape of near perfection. Farther south, Feuchtwangen has a fine $old\ marketplace\ and\ Romane sque\ cloisters.\ South\ of\ that\ is\ the\ walled\ city\ of\ Dinkelsb\"{u}hl\ (see\ High-light)$ $lights), after which the route passes through the strange, bare landscape of the Ries, a crater, 15.5 \,miles$ (25 km) across, formed by a giant meteorite strike about 15 million years ago. A good place from which to survey the area is the tower of St. George's Minster in Nördlingen (see Highlights)—yet another $medieval\ gem\ of\ a\ town,\ protected\ by\ a\ ring\ of\ ramparts,\ with\ 16\ towers\ and\ five\ gateways.\ From\ here,$ cross the Danube at Donauwörth and skirt the city of Augsburg, south of which Lechfeld is the site of one of Europe's most decisive battles in 955, when Otto the Great, Duke of Saxony, drove the pagan Hungarians back east. The foothills of the Alps begin beyond the town of Landsberg am Lech, as you approach the end of the Romantic Road at Füssen.

UNEXPECTED PLEASURE | Perched on a crag amid forests and waterfalls, 2.8 miles (4.5 km) east of Füssen, King Ludwig II of Bavaria's wildly romantic castle of **Neuschwanstein**, started in 1869, forms the final, crowning glory of the Romantische Strasse. The best way to view it is from the Marienbrücke, a footbridge 300 feet (90 m) above a raignic porrent. The castle's interior decor was inspired by the operas of Wagner and Ludwig's idealized view of the Middle Ages.

OPPOSITE: Cobbled streets zigzag up a hillside in Rothenburg ob der Tauber ("Red Fortress above the Tauber").

| HIGHLIGHTS |

You can still only enter Dinkelsbühl through one of its four gates. Inside the walls are grand merchant houses and the 15th-century **St. George's**Minster, one of southern Germany's finest churches, whose lofty interior creates a wonderful feeling of calm.

A display of 6,000 tin soldiers in Nördlingen's **Municipal Museum** depicts the battle of Nördlingen (1634) during the Thirty Years War.

FROM: Würzburg, Germany TO: Füssen, Germany ROADS: Romantic Road (Romantische Strasse)/local roads, B25, B17

DISTANCE: 220 miles (350 km)

DRIVING TIME: 6 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Try out the excellent
local dry white Franconian
wines, bottled in flask-shaped
Bocksbeutel.
romantischestrasse.de



DRIVING THROUGH HISTORY | 275

HISTORIC PUGLIA

Still relatively undiscovered, Puglia is a magical region of plains and low limestone hills that includes the heel of Italy. Among its glories are beautiful Romanesque cathedrals and churches, dating from the early Middle Ages.

egin in the city of Bari, whose modern port and suburbs crowd in on the Città Vecchia (Old City), a labyrinth of streets and alleys that includes most of the city's

wecchia (Old city), a labyrinth of streets and alleys that includes most of the common monuments. Chief among them are the 12th-century Basilica di San Nicola and Cattedrale di San Sabino, both supreme examples of Puglia's Romanesque architectural heritage. From here, follow the coastal road west along the Adriatic coast to Trani, another busy port with whitewashed buildings and an outstanding Romanesque cathedral, famed for its bronze portals. Farther along the coast, sights in the town of Barletta include the Romanesque Chiesa del Santo Sepolcro and the Colosso di Barletta, a massive 16-foot (5 m) high bronze statue of an unknown late Roman emperor. Head south on the SSI70 through the town of Andria and follow signs for one of southern Italy's most memorable and mysterious sights, the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II's great fortress at Castel del Monte. Built in 1229–40, the castle betrays an obsession with the number eight—octagonal in plan, with an octagonal courtyard, and eight octagonal towers, each of which contains two stories of eight rooms each. No one knows the significance, but the number eight clearly had some special meaning: Castel del Monte was the only octagonal fortress among some 200 quadrilateral castles commissioned by Frederick II on his return from the Crusades. After enjoying these tantalizing mysteries and the spectacular hilltop position, make your way back east on the SP234 to Ruvo di Puglia, with another Romanesque cathedral. Farther east, the tour's last cathedral, again Romanesque; is all Bitonto,

EXCURSION The city of Matera, some 40 miles (65 km) southeast of Bari, is known for its ancient cave dwellings. The Strada Panoramica (Panoramic Road) gives a good view of the caves, but the best way to explore the honeycomb of dwellings is on foot. Visit some of the 120 or so chiese rupestri (cave churches), carved out by monks in the 8th-13th earthries

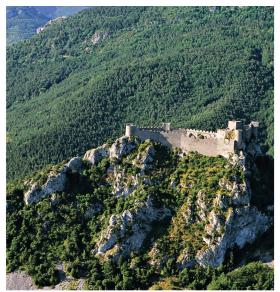
surrounded by olive groves. From here, it's an easy 12.5-mile (20 km) drive back on the SP231 to Bari.



FROM: Loop route from Bari, Italy ROADS: SS16, SS170, SP234, SP231 DISTANCE: 89 miles (143 km) DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours WHEN TO 6.0 Year-round PLANNING: Be sure to sample the delicious and much-prized local ewes'-milk cheese, Canestrato Pugliese. This hard cheese with a strong flavor is typically served grated over other dishes. viaggiareinpuglia.it

Sitting atop a hill and immersed in history, Matera was one of the 2019 European Capitals of Culture.





The hilltop site of Peyrepertuse is so cramped that the fortifications are only a few feet wide in places

THE CATHAR TRAIL

When Catharism swept across southern France in the early 12th century, the Catholic Church launched a crusade against the heretics. This troubled history forms the constant context for a tour of spectacularly located castles in the wild Pyrenean foothills.

he 13th-century castle keep outside the village of Arques makes a gentle pastoral starting point for a drive through "Cathar country." Enjoy the valley setting, and in the village visit the House of Déodat Roché, a noted 20th-century historian of the Cathars. Head east along the D613, then north to the dramatic hilltop ruins of the Château de Termes, built on the site of an earlier Cathar stronghold, which fell to forces led by the Anglo-French nobleman Simon de Montfort in 1210. Back on the D613, head east to the village of Villerouge-Termenès, whose imposing castle dates from the 13th century. An audiovisual guided tour tells the story of the last Cathar leader, or Perfecti, Guilhem Béli $baste, burned\ at\ the\ stake\ in\ Villerouge-Termen\`es\ in\ 1321.\ Double\ back\ on\ the\ D613\ for\ 2\ miles\ (3\ km),$ then head south through a rocky gorge of the Torgan River to the village of Padern (see Highlights), set in a fertile valley among rocky peaks. From here, head 8 miles (13 km) west for the Château de Peyrepertuse, parts of which date to Cathar times. Be prepared for a long, winding drive up to the castle—it takes at least half an hour. Inside is a chapel, and stairs lead to a final inner refuge. The views to the sea and the peaks of the Pyrenees are breathtaking. The next stop, 7 miles (11 km) to the southeast, is the Château de Quéribus, whose keep and chapel look out over the Roussillon plain. From here, head south, then west along the D117 for the awe-inspiring crag-top castle at Puilaurens. The D117 carries on to Puivert, whose château, despite its sturdy defenses, is more a palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle. Your last stop is the palace than a castle that a castle thangreat rock (or pog) of Montségur (see Highlights).

| HIGHLIGHTS |

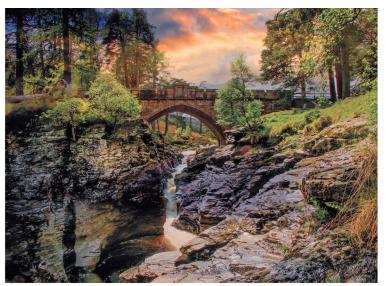
Built at the foot of another castletopped crag. **Padern** lies at the heart of a winer-growing area. To sample the local vintages, visit Les Terroirs du Vertige, a wine cooperative with a shop in the village, open year-round. **Cucugnan**, near Quérilius, also has a cooperative and some private caves that you can visit.

The Pog de Montségur, a 4,000-foot (1,207 m) outcrop of volcanic rock looming above the small village of Montségur, evokes the bitter dying strugies of the Cathars. A challenging climb to the summit brings the reward of superb views and a chance to visit the ruins of the 13th-century castle, built over an earlier fortification. In 1244, this was the last major Cathar stronghold to fall to French royal forces. Just behind the castle are the foundations of buildings that have been confirmed as authentically Cathar.

FROM: Arques, France
TO: Montségur, France
ROADS: D613, D117, local roads
DISTANCE: 115 miles (182 km)
DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: The spectacular
walled, hilltop city of
Carcassonne, a World Heritage
site, is a good place to base
yourself.
languedoc-france.info



DRIVING THROUGH HISTORY | 277



The swift-flowing River Dee plunges through a rocky gorge at Linn of Dee, close to Braemar Castle.

SCOTLAND I

ROYAL DEESIDE

Queen Victoria and her consort, Prince Albert, were so captivated by the valley of the River Dee that they built Balmoral Castle, their summer home, there. A drive west along the valley from Aberdeen takes you past alluring woodlands, mountains, and romantic castles.

he port city of Aberdeen has plenty to detain you at the start of your jaunt. Don't miss the 16th $century\ Provost\ Skene's\ House, the\ Art\ Gallery\ (with\ a\ good\ collection\ of\ paintings\ by\ the\ early$ 20th-century Scottish Colorist school), and the Maritime Museum. Watch out for the effect of the northern sunlight on the pale local granite—giving the Granite City its nickname—which can $sparkle\ magically\ on\ a\ summer's\ day.\ Once\ out\ of\ the\ city,\ head\ west\ along\ the\ A93,\ turning\ right\ beyond$ the village of Peterculter to Drum Castle and Garden, an impressive 13th-century keep with a 17thcentury Jacobean mansion attached. Back on the A93, pick up signs to another castle and garden at Crathes—a turreted 16th-century tower house. In the town of Banchory, turn left on the High Street for $a short \, detour \, to \, the \, Bridge \, of \, Feugh, \, where \, from \, May \, through \, September \, you \, can \, enjoy \, the \, entrancing$ sight of salmon leaping the Falls of Feugh on their way upstream to their spawning grounds. The A93 $\,$ continues west through Aboyne to the town of Ballater, once a popular sparement, After Ballater, the road hugs the wooded banks of the Dee as far as Crathie, whose simple parish church is the one attended by Queen Elizabeth and the Royal Family when they are staying at Balmoral in summer. You catch glimpses of Balmoral through the trees on the south side of the road. The town of Braemar, with the peaks of the Cairngorm Mountains rising to the north, is famous for $\,$ the annual Braemar Gathering, whose events include caber tossing and hammer throw $ing. \ On weekends, you can visit the imposing \ Braemar \ Castle, owned \ and \ run \ by \ the \ local$ community. From Braemar, follow signs for Linn of Dee, one of Queen Victoria's favorite viewpoints, where the River Dee foams dramatically through a narrow, rocky channel.

FROM: Aberdeen, Scotland
TO: Linn of Dee, Scotland
ROADS: A93, milror roads
DISTANCE: 68 miles (109 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Royal Deeside and
the Cairngorms are a wildlife
paradise. Keep an eye out for
red squirrels, pine martens,
and ospreys.
discoverroyaldeeside.com



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ALSO RECOMMENDED

• DISCOVERY ROUTE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Begin in Charleston and head northwest on I-26, following the course of the old South Carolina Railroad. Pass through old plantations and mill towns on your way to Walhalla, 136 miles (219 km) away on the edge of the Appalachians.

sc-heritagecorridor.org

• COPPER COUNTRY TRAIL, MICHIGAN

During the 1840s, copper prospectors swarmed into the Keweenaw Peninsula, sparking the U.S.'s first mining boom. Popular with birders, this 47-mile (76 km) drive from Hancock to Copper Harbor provides insight into the mining legacy and expansive views of Lake Superior.

coppercountrytrail.org

• ENCHANTED CIRCLE, NEW MEXICO

From Eagle Nest, take N. Mex 38 east to the ruins of the 1860s gold boom site, Elizabethtown. Past Questa, head north on N. Mex 378 to the D. H. Lawrence Ranch and Memorial, the author's 1920s home. End the drive at the Native American Taos Pueblo site, following signs off N. Mex. 522. enchanted/circle.org

ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE GOLD COAST, HAWAII

This 122-mile (196 km) loop from Waimea passes mountain and ocean views, as well as important archaeological sites. Stop off to see the Puako petroglyphs, the hundreds of archaeological sites at Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park and the ancient temple at Pu'ukohola Heiau National Historic Site.

gohawaii.com

ARRIVAL OF THE CONQUERORS, MEXICO

In the 16th century, Hernán Cortés's expedition led to the downfall of the Aztec Empire. The marks of conquest and of pre-Spanish history are revealed on this 50-mile (80 km) drive from ancient Quiahuiztlán south on Hwy. 180 to the 400-year-old seaport of Veracruz, including Cortés's first garrison at Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz, and the ruined city of Cempoala.

• BANGKOK TO AYUTTHAYA AND OLD SUKHOTHAI, THAILAND

Just 40 miles (64 km) north of Bangkok is the historic capital, Ayutthaya. The 15th-century city has three palaces and 400 temples, holding such wonders as the huge pagoda, Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon. Another five hours north along Rtes. 23 and 117 is an even older center of power, Sukhothai. The 13th-century capital city has ruins covering 27 square miles (70 km²).

sacred-destinations.com/thailand

• THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE, INDIA

Camels and cows share the road with cars on this route. From Delhi's Red Fort, drive south on the NH 2 to Agra, and the resplendent Taj Mahal, then head west to Jaipur's Amber Fort and summer palace. incredibleindia.org

ROUTE OF THE SAINTS, POLAND

Kraków's Route of Saints connects 16 beautiful churches. Also visit the 14th-century Wawel Hill cathedral, which has an incredible 18 chapels and is the burial ground for most of Poland's royalty. Here you can climb the Sigismund Tower and see its famously enormous bell.

krakow-info.com

MEDIEVAL VILLAGES, GERMANY

Running for around 750 miles (1,207 km) from Mannheim to Prague, the Castle Road (see also p. 271) leads travelers from one medieval gem to the next. Mixed into the landscape are rustic historic villages, such as Mosbach, Bad Wimpfen, Schwäbisch Hall, and Rothenburg, all with picturesque half-timbered buildings.

cometogermany.com

• CASTLES AND EYRIES, SPAIN

This 77-mile (124 km) drive from Huesca to Jaca showcases Spain's mixed Islamic and Christian heritage. On the way, visit the Colegiata, a Renaissance church built on ruins of an Arab castle in the hill village of Bolea; Castilo de Loarre, a walled-and-turreted 11th-century castle built on Roman walls; and the partly ruined 18th-century Monasterio de San Juan de la Peña. turismodearagon.com

• HISTORIC GRAVES, IRELAND

Glencolmcille was settled by farmers at least 5,000 years ago, and their well-preserved tombs can be seen at Mainnéar na Mortlaidh and An Clochán Mór. At Málainn Mhóir, less elaborate tombs date from as early as 2000 B.C.

• ESTRADA REAL, BRAZIL

Colonial Brazil's Royal Road linked the gold and diamond mines of Minas Gerais with the ports of Paraty and Rio de Janeiro. Inevitably, towns grew up that reflected the wealth pouring along the road. Today, enjoy that legacy in places such as Ouro Preto, with cobbled streets and baroque churches, including the lovely São Francisco de Assis and the astonishing Nossa Senhora do Pilar, where an estimated 880 pounds (400 kg) of gold was used to adorn the interior.

institutoestradareal.com.br/en/estradareal

• PREHISTORIC ORKNEY, SCOTLAND

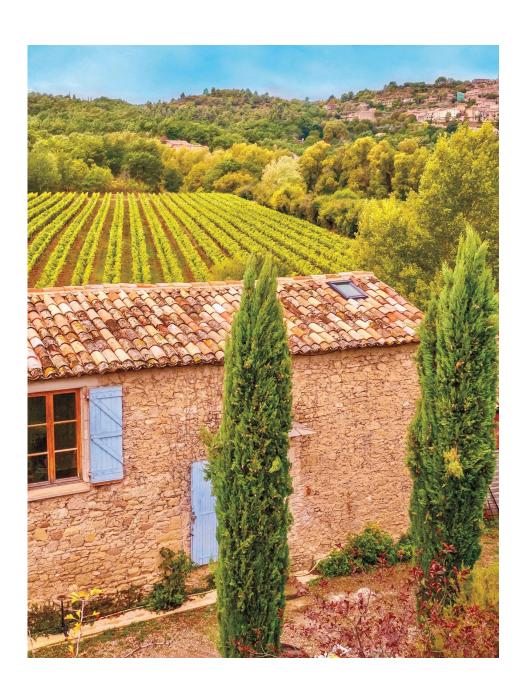
PREHISTORIC ORKNEY, SCOTLAND
The islands of Orkney have an exceptional
wealth of prehistoric remains. Start with
the four major sites on Mainland (the largest island): he Stone Age village of Skara
Brae, the Standing Stones of Stenness, the
chambered tomb of Maeshowe, and the
Ring (stone circle) of Brodgar. Sites on
other islands include Rousay's Midhowe
chambered tomb, Papa Westray's Knap of
Howar (the best-preserved Neolithic dwellings in northwestern Europe), and the
Tomb of the Eagles on South Ronaldsay.

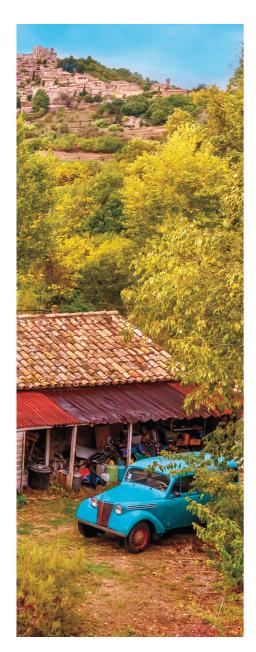
• GOTHIC CATHEDRALS, FRANCE

The soaring Gothic style was born in France in the 12th century, and a tour of the country's northern cathedrals exposes you to some of its most sublime expressions. Begin with Laon, an example of early Gothic, still indebted to the previous Romanesque style. Amiens is the largest French Gothic cathedral, while Beauvais has the highest vault. Rouen is familiar from Claude Monet's paintings. Chartresis the greatest of all, a stunning integration of art with architecture.

france-voyage.com/en

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CHAPTER 8

GOURMET ROAD TRIPS

or those who love good food and wine, all roads lead to dinner—or to a glassful of something delicious. Such travelers savor journeys involving vineyard-covered slopes, orchards radiant with ripe fruit, street markets crammed with spicy delicacies, freshly harvested greens for sale at a farm gate, fishing boats landing their silvery catch, and country inns whose kitchens make the most of the local bounty. The $routes\,on\,these\,pages\,lead\,not\,only\,to\,fabulous\,food\,and$ drink but into fascinating landscapes—feasts for the eye and nourishment for the soul. A meander through rural Michigan in August finds the state's legendary cherries at their juicy peak. Adventurous coffee-lovers on a quest for the perfect cup will discover it on a road $through \, the \, Costa \, Rican \, rain forest, not \, far \, from \, a \, town$ named Paradise. A loop through the wide-open spaces of Australia's Hunter Valley showcases the vineyards of a region celebrated for its production of some of the finest New World wines. In Sicily, archaeology meets gastronomy in a haunting landscape of ancient temples $and\,epicure an\,delights-honey, wild\,herbs, hand made$ ravioli with pistachio nuts, aromatic olive oils pressed from the fruit of centuries-old groves.

Provence, one of France's top wine-producing regions.

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KENTUCKY BOURBON TRAIL

Spend a leisurely day or two touring the rolling hills of central Kentucky—where distilleries are situated no more than an hour's drive apart—and sampling the legendary caramel-color bourbons that have been produced here for centuries.

egin in Lexington and head west on U.S. 60 to Versailles, following signs to Woodford Reserve, the first distillery on the route. You will pass open fields filled with majestic thoroughbred horses—an added attraction, especially on Kentucky Derby weekend. Drive a short way out of Versailles on U.S. 62 toward Lawrenceburg, making a stop on the outskirts of Lawrenceburg at Wild Turkey Distillery, where production techniques have remained unchanged for generations. From Lawrenceburg, head south on U.S. 127 for 4 miles (6 km) until $you \, arrive \, at \, Four \, Roses \, Distillery. \, An \, extensive \, tour \, is \, offered \, here, \, which \, includes \, sampling \, ``white \, includes \, sampling \, incl$ $dog," pure corn \ liquor \ fresh \ off \ the \ still \ and \ ready \ for \ putting \ in \ barrels \ for \ aging. \ Less \ than \ a \ mile \ (1.6$ km) farther south on U.S. 127 you reach the Bluegrass Parkway, which runs through the Bluegrass Hills of central Kentucky. Drive west to Bardstown, the Bourbon Capital of the World, and stop off at The Old $Talbott\,Tavern, which has been serving\,America's\,Native\,Spirit\,for\,200\,years.\,A\,short\,detour\,along\,Ky.$ $245\,brings\,you\,to\,Jim\,Beam\,Distillery, the \,largest\,distillery\,in\,the\,area,\,run\,by\,the\,seventh\,generation$ of the Beam family. The next stop on the route is the Heaven Hill Bourbon Heritage Center, founded as Prohibition ended in the 1930s. Warehouses dot the verdant landscape as you continue on Ky. 49 $through\ Loretto\ to\ Maker's\ Mark.\ Don't\ miss\ out\ on\ this\ final\ distillery,\ where\ the\ bright\ red\ and\ black$ $buildings\ contrast\ beautifully\ with\ the\ surrounding\ emerald\ green\ hills.\ The\ picture-postcard\ setting$ is further enhanced by the perfectly manicured grounds, ideal for a stroll. To return to Lexington, drive east to Springfield, head north on Ky. 555, and take the Bluegrass Parkway.

I STAY A WHILE I After the third or fourth distillery, take a short break to rest your palate. Drive southwest 25 miles (40 km) on U.S. 31 from the center of Bardstown to reach Hodgenville and the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace. National Historic Site. Here you can tour the Lincoln museum and see Lincoln's boyhood home at Knob Creek Farm, where his family rented a portion of the land for five years. Knob Creek is also the name of a famous bourbon brand.

FROM: Loop route from Lexington, Kentucky
ROADS: U.S. 60, 62, 127, Bluegrass
Pkwy, Ky, 245, 49, 555, local roads

DRIVING TIME: 5 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Check with
individual distilleries for their
visiting hours.
kybourbontrail.com

DISTANCE: 197 miles (317 km)

These copper stills represent one stage of the historic distillation process used to create Kentucky bourbon.





The harvesting of grapes in vineyards across California usually takes place in October

| CALIFORNIA |

NAPA VALLEY WINES

The wine country of Sonoma and Napa Valleys lies within easy reach of San Francisco, and this drive takes in many wonders of northern California along the way—redwood forests, remote seashores, and charming rural towns.

eave San Francisco north on U.S. 101, crossing the Golden Gate Bridge. Beyond the tunnel, pretty Sausalito—with stunning views back across the bay to San Francisco—overlooks the harbor. Once you reach Victorian Petaluma, turn east on Calif. 116 toward the Sonoma Valley, which claims to be the birthplace of the California wine industry; premium wineries have been making wine here since the mid-19th century. Stop off in the town of Sonoma on Calif. 12, visiting the Sonoma State Historic Park with its 1823 mission and other attractions. Wind through backcountry on Calif. 12 and, on the outskirts of Santa Rosa, turn right onto Calistoga Road. At the intersection with Petrified Forest Road, turn right again. About 4 miles (6 km) before Calistoga, you reach the Petrified Forest, a preserve of redwoods felled by a volcanic cruption 3.4 million years ago and turned to stone over centuries. You now enter the Napa Valley, home to many famous vineyards, including Krug, Beaulieu, and Beringer. Calistoga's thermal springs and geyser, Old Faithful, have also been attracting visitors since 1859. To return to San Francisco, head south, passing the towns of St. Helena and Napa on Calif. 29 before turning west along San Pablo Bay on Calif. 37 and rejoining U.S. 101.

IN FOCUS One of the most widely planted grape varieties in California, Zinfandel can be used to make red or white wines, although it is most commonly used for red. These reds emphasize flavors like spicy pepper, raspberry, or cherry, with tannins that give a kind of texture or thickness. The founder of the historic Buena Vista Carneros winery, Court Agoston HarastPhy, was last the first to introduce Zinfandel grapes to California wine, and there are still daily tastings in the original 1862 cellar.

FROM: Loop route from San Francisco, California ROADS: U.S. 101, Calif. 116, 12, Calistoga Road, Petrified Forest Road, Calif. 29, 37 DISTANCE: 170 miles (274 km) DRIVING TIME: 45 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: napavalley.com



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1 CHEESE, VERMONT

In winter, when artisanal cheeses are ripe, follow Vt. 22a, over the hills and pastures of the "Cheese Trail," north from Bennington to Middlebury (with seven cheesemakers in the vicinity), then to Burlington. Aside from famous aged Vermont cheddar, artisans are now extending the range of choices to include feta, goat's milk cheese, and ewe's milk cheese.

PLANNING: The Vermont Cheesemakers Festival is held each July. www.vtcheese.com

2 PUMPKINS AND CHOCOLATE, PENNSYLVANIA

From Philadelphia, head west on U.S. 30 through Amish farm country to Lancaster, where the Landis Valley Museum hosts Pumpkin Patch Harvest Days in October. The same weekend, a "Chocolate Walk" in nearby Lititz invites you to visit more than 20 chocolate-tasting sites. Take the slow lane in an Amish buggy ride in Bird-in-Hand or Ronks, down roads lined with amber fall color.

PLANNING: For all things chocolate, plus a theme park and spa, visit Hershey, northwest of Lititz, www.padutchcountry.com

3 PEACHES, GEORGIA

Start a tour of the Peach State at Macon, and head south to Byron. In the warmth of June, peaches are at their peak, weighing down farm stalls. They are celebrated at the Peach Festival in Fort Valley. This is a chance to see—and taste—the world's largest peach cobbler at 11 feet (3.5 m) wide. It's so big that its sweet cookie topping has to be stirred with cance paddles.

PLANNING: Ga. 49 south of Byron is known as Peach Parkway, www.gapeachfestival.com

4 CHERRY ORCHARD DRIVE, MICHIGAN

Early in July, just as cherries ripen all across Michigan, Traverse City hosts the National Cherry Festival. Here you will find cherries used in everything from distilleries to cheescakes, pies, and soups, showcased in numerous events. Then drive northwest—stopping to sample cherry wine en route—to Glen Arbor, where all sorts of cherry-themed treats can be found at the Cherry Republic Shop.

10

THE TOP

WAYSIDE BOUNTY

There are countless places where gastronomists can search out their favorite foods, from honey to chocolate, and peaches to mangoes.

PLANNING: You will need to buy tickets in advance for many events during the Nationa Cherry Festival. www.absolutemichigan.com

5 SHELLFISH, MISSISSIPPI

Take U.S. 90 along the spectacular Mississippi Gulf Coast. Shrimp boats dock at Biloxi's small craft harbor and the Pass Christian harbor, loaded with shellfish bounty. Whether you buy pink, white, or brown shrimp, bring a cooler. In early May, witness the Blessing of the Fleet, a colorful custom initiated in 1929 by fishermen of Croatian descent.

PLANNING: The Gulf's seafood industry has been severely impacted by the 2010 oil spill. Check www.gulfcoast.org for updates.

6 BLUE MOUNTAIN COFFEE, JAMAICA

The coffee grown in Jamaica's Blue Mountains is widely regarded as the best in the world. From downtown Kingston, zigzag your way up the mountainside to Irish Town, the lower limit of the coffeegrowing zone. Continue through Newcastle and Hardwar Gap to the Twyman family's Old Tavern Coffee Estate. Wander trails through the estate and enjoy a fasting.

PLANNING: If possible, spend a day or two in the mountains. Craighton and Clifton Mount estates also offer tours, but book in advance. things-to-do-in-jamaica.com/blue-mountains

OPPOSITE: Some of the world's finest coffee is grown high in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica.

7 LYCHEES IN GUANGDONG, CHINA

For hundreds of years, Guangdong province has been famous for these most delectable of fruits. From Guangzhou city, head south to the villages of Zhongshan district, surrounded by lychee orchards, or 'gardens.' Equally famous for their lychee gardens are Zengcheng district east of Guangzhou and Conghua to the north.

PLANNING: In harvesttime, June and July, join the crowds who come to pick their own lychees. guangzhoutravelguide.com

8 GUIMARAS MANGOES, PHILIPPINES

The world's sweetest, tastiest mangoes grow, it is said, on the small Philippine island of Guimaras. Come, try them for yourself. Take a tour of a mango farm. In the capital, Jordan visit the 22-acre (9 ha) Mango Research and Development Center. Then pop into the gift shop of the Trappist monastery next door, which specializes in mango jams.

PLANNING: The island's Manggahan (Mango) Festival takes place in May.

9 PISTACHIOS AND HONEY ON MONTE ETNA, ITALY

A thousand years ago, Sicily's Arab rulers introduced pistachios to the island, and they have thrived in Monte Etna's volcanicrich soil ever since. Start in mountainside Bronte, then continue south and east through Adrano and Biancavilla. On Etna's eastern slopes, wind back up to Zafferana Etnea, famous for honey, Don't miss the village's Museum of Beekeeping.

PLANNING: In late September and early October, Bronte holds a pistachio festival. visitsicily.info/en

10 HOME OF THE POTATO, PERU

The potato originated in the Andes and has been cultivated for 7000 years. From Cuzco, head along the Sacred Valley to the Parque de la Papa in Pisag, where you can take a guided tour and see some of the 1,300 potato varieties grown there. Return to Cuzco via Moray, an Inca site that may have been an agricultural research station.

PLANNING: Visit MIL restaurant, near Moray.

COFFEE IN COSTA RICA

This loop drive takes you southeast of Paraíso into Costa Rica's premier coffee-growing region, through a Shangri-La canyon edged by the thickly forested flanks of the Talamanca Mountains and along the shore of tranquil Lago de Cachí.

araíso means "paradise" in Spanish, and the town, south of Hwy. 10, brims with the fruits of the fertile surrounding landscape, especially at its famous farmers' market in the center of town. Follow a winding road for 1.5 miles (2.4 km) to the Mirador Orosí, with views over the valley. Soon the road descends steeply into the canyon, and you wend your way beyond the Río Aguacaliente, past fields of shiny-leaved coffee bushes, to the village of Orosí, backed by forested hills. On your right, you pass the charming Iglesia de San José de Orosí, whose thick adobe walls and beamed roof have withstood many earthquakes. Visit the hillside thermal baths on the edge of the village. Just south of Orosí, the Beneficio Orlich coffee-producing plant sits at the junction to Parque Nacional Tapantí–Macizo de la Muerte, a rainforest with rich vegetation and countless waterfalls. The park attracts dedicated bird $watchers, for whom it opens at 6 a.m. Stay on the main road, which crosses the R\'{i}o Grande de Oros\'{i}via$ a narrow suspension bridge. Immediately beyond the river, turn left and trace its course along a deteriorated section of road. After 4 miles (6 km), rejoin the paved road along the southern shore of Lago de Cachí. The lake, now a haunt of waterfowl, was created in the 1960s when the Río Reventazón was dammed for hydroelectricity. Try the fishing and boating from La Casona del Cafetal, a lakeside $coffee farm \ and \ restaurant, from \ where \ you \ can \ also \ go \ hiking \ and \ horseback \ riding. \ Continue \ east \ to$ the Casa del Soñador, the former home of sculptor Macedonia Quesada, whose children continue his $tradition\ of\ making\ and\ selling\ wood\ carvings\ over\ hospitable\ cups\ of\ coffee.\ Soon\ the\ road\ turns\ west$ and crosses the Presa de Cachí; 5 miles (8 km) farther on, you'll see signs for Ujarrás, renowned for its ruined church (see Hidden History). Continue west to return to Paraíso.

I HIDDEN HISTORY I The ruins at Ujarrás stand on the fringe of Lago de Cachí. The church, Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción, dates from 1681 but was abandoned in 1833 when the valley flooded. Due to recurring floods and earthquakes, it remains in ruins. Sitting on lawns fronted by bright flowers, it is a popular picnic spot.



FROM: Loop route from Paraiso, Costa Rica ROADS: Hwy. 10, mountain roads DISTANCE: 19 miles (30 km) DRIVING TIME: 1 hour WHEN TO GO: Dry season is from December to April. PLANNING: This drive can be done in a day from San José. govisitcostarica.com

Coffee beans in the Orosí Valley are harvested between September and February.





Some of the beautifully elaborate carvings of ancient Chan Chan, which was once home to up to 60,000 people

| PERU |

PERU'S CEVICHE COAST

The Pan-American Highway along Peru's arid north shore offers an enticing blend of seafood and ancient civilization. From freshly made ceviche and chinguirito to pyramids and palaces of empires that preceded the Inca, the coast offers something for all the senses.

erched at the northern end of the metro area, Lima's international airport offers a quick escape from the sprawling Peruvian capital. About an hour outside the city, Lomas de Ancón National Reserve offers short hikes through a rare coastal ecosystem. Huacho provides a first chance to smple Peruvian seafood at cevicherias (fish restaurants) like El Clásico del Mar and El Coral. Just north of town, the hilltop temples, amphitheater, and other ruins of Caral overlook the Supe Valley. Founded around 5,000 years ago, it's one of the oldest urban centers in the western hemisphere. Another ancient city looms ahead on the Pan-American Highway, the ruins of Cerro Sechin. After a long day on the road, Chimbote and its snug harbor are a good place to spend the night. After dark, stroll the Malecón waterforn past local favorites like Mar & Luna, which serves up local music and several types of ceviche. Those who linger longer in Chimbote can lounge on fine beaches or sandboard in the coastal dunes.

The onward drive along the Pan-American to Trujillo takes around two hours. Peru's third largest city, founded by the Spanish in 1534, boasts a wealth of colonial architecture. On the nearby coast is something even older—the ancient city of Chan Chan—capital of the Chimú civilization that flourished between 900 and 1470 A.D. Trujillo's numerous restaurants feature chinguirito (salted grilled guitarfish), causas seafood casseroles, chupe seafood chowders, and ceviche made from all manner of fish.

I STAY A WHILE I from Chimbote or Sechin it's easy to venture inland to the Cordillera Blanca and Parque Nacional Huascarán. The planet's highest tropical mountain range harbors Peru's talliest peak and hundreds of glaciers, as well as condors, pumas, spectacled bears, and wild vicuñas. Hiking trails lead through deep valleys to glacial lakes and the headwaters of rivers that drain into the Amazon.

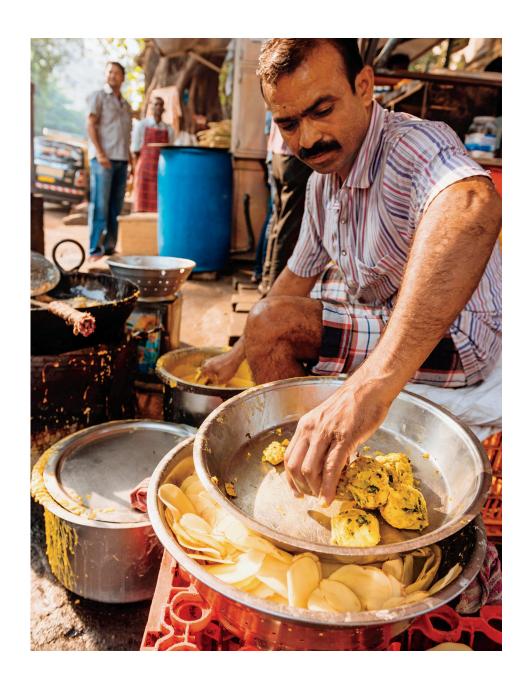
FROM: Lima, Peru To: Trujillo, Peru ROADS: Pan-American Highway (Route 1N)

DISTANCE: 370 miles (595 km)
DRIVING TIME: 10.5 hours

WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Schedule your drive
to coincide with Trujillo's Feria
Nacional del Queso cheese and
wine festival in May,
peru.travel/?internacional



GOURMET ROAD TRIPS | 287



INDIA

MUMBAI

As you travel through the colonial heart of Mumbai, visit the bustling markets where brightly colored spices are piled perilously high, and sample the legendary Indian fast food sold on every street corner. Forget hamburgers; food here is hot, cheap, and very spicy.



 $The \ High \ Court \ building \ in \ Mumbai, \ designed \ in \ Victorian \ Gothic \ style, \ was \ completed \ in \ 1878.$

pollo Pier, on the waterfront in southern Mumbai, is the site of the Gateway of India (1924), a majestic archway built to commemorate the visit of the King-Emperor George V and his consort Queen Mary in 1911. A prime example of colonial architecture, it is now a major city attraction. The area is brought to life by street vendors tempting tourists to try corn sizzling on white-hot charcoal and fishermen returning with their catch (see Highlights). Opposite stands the century-old Taj Mahal Palace with its iconic red dome. Drive north on Mayo Road past Mumbai's finest High Victorian Gothic architecture, including Colonel Fuller's Bombay High Court and several imposing university buildings with views over the open park, where informal cricket matches often take place. Turn right onto Veer Nariman Road to the brightly colored Flora Fountain. Beyond the fountain lies Horniman Circle, on the edge of the old Fort area, which was the heart of the 18th-century city and still retains some of its old charm. You will find numerous small eateries in this part of town specializing in thick, coconut-based Mangalorean curries, often made with caviar or spiced fish.

Take Frere Road (P. D. Mello Road) past old fort bastions to explore the vast Victoria Terminus, an impressive Gothic structure modeled on St. Pancras Station in London. Outside the station, carts and hawkers are always on hand to sell their wares to travelers. Just north of the station, on Dr. D. N. Road, is Crawford Market, where the fragrance of fresh fruit and vegetables piled high inside carries for quite a distance. Several of the friezes and the fountain in this medieval complex were designed by Lockwood Kipling, father of the novelist Rudyard. Cruise along Lokmanya Tilak Road (Carnac Road), diverting to the streets north if you wish, where stores selling exotic foods, clothing, and jewelry cluster together by type. Once you reach Marine Drive, head north until you reach Chowpatty Beach, a highlight of a visit to Mumbai. At night, makeshift stalls appear, crowds arrive, and hot and cold *chaat* (snacks) are peddled with gusto (see Highlights). Take a moment to look back at the view along Marine Drive, fondly known as the Queen's Necklace because of the glittering lights that shine out over the bay.

OPPOSITE: There is a street stall for every taste in Mumbai—delicious samosas, potato patties, skewered kebabs, vegetable masalas, chicken tikkas, and more.

HIGHLIGHTS |

Next to the Gateway to India, visit the frenzied **Colaba Fish Market** at dawn, when colorfully clad Koli fisherwomen sort the catch.

Chowpatty Beach takes on a carnival atmosphere at night, with sand sculptors, musicians, and fairground rides entertaining the crowds.

One of many specialties, **Kulfi** is a delicately flavored Indian version of ice cream—the perfect after-dinner treat for soothing the tastebuds.

FROM: Gateway of India, Mumbai, India To: Chowpatty Beach, India ROADS: Mayo Rd., Veer Nariman Rd., Frere Rd., Dr. D. N. Rd., Lokmanya Tilak Rd., Marine Drive

DISTANCE: 5 miles (8.1 km)
DRIVING TIME: 30 minutes
WHEN TO GO: October to
February

PLANNING: Standards of culinary hygiene are variable, so exercise caution. mumbai.org.uk





Women harvesting leaves near Nuwara Eliya, or "Little England," at the heart of Sri Lanka's tea industry

| SRI LANKA |

TEA TIME IN SRI LANKA

You don't have to be an avid tea drinker to relish a road trip through Sri Lanka's scenic central highlands, a lush region that helped spark the English fondness for a "cuppa" and still produces some of the world's best leaves.

t started with James Taylor, a Scottish agronomist who planted 19 acres (7 ha) of tea on the outskirts of Kandy in 1867. That modest plot spawned a tea-growing wave that by the end of the 19th century had swept across the highlands of Sri Lanka (then called Ceylon). Starting out from Kandy along Hantana Road, Taylor's historic Loolecondera Tae Estate is the first top on a drive through the island's lush tea country. His hilltop cottage lies in ruins near Taylor's Seat—a granite slab where he once sat in contemplation—and Kondgala cliff with its awesome views across the landscape.

Another 40 miles (70 km) down the road is Nuwara Eliya, hub of the Sri Lankan highlands and world famous for tea. With its quaint cottages, whitewashed churches, flower-filled gardens, and cool, moist climate, the town is often called "Little England." Tours of the Pedro Tea Factory and Bluefield Tea Garden provide insights into the local plantation scene. Nuwara Eliya is also a great base for exploring the mountainous terrain of nearby Adam's Peak and Horton Plains National Park. Beyond Horton Plains is Dambatenne Tea Estate, founded by Sir Thomas Lipton in 1890. Visitors can tour the factory, hike or tuk-tuk to a vertiginous viewpoint called Lipton's Seat, or overnight at Thotalagala Plantation House.

Leaving the highlands behind, the route meanders down to Udawalawe National Park—renowned for its wild elephants and other indigenous creatures—before reaching the Indian Ocean at Matara. Farther down the coast, Handunugoda Tea Estate and its tea museum provide an intriguing contrast to the highland plantations as well as a chance to sip their famous "Virgin White Tea" before cruising into Galle. A major trading port for more than 3,000 years, Galle took its present form in the 17th century when the Dutch surrounded the town with massive granite walls. Everything inside the ramparts is a UNESCO World Heritage site, considered the best example of a European fortified town in South Asia. From Galle, it's an easy, two-hour cruise up the island's west coast to Colombo.

FROM: Kandy, Sri Lanka
TO: Colombo, Sri Lanka
ROADS: Various
DISTANCE: 362 miles (S83 km)
DRIVING TIME: 15 hours
WHEN TO GO: Vear-round
PLANNING: Given the
rugged nature of some tea
country roads, 4WD is highly
recommended.



290 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

| CHINA |

BEIJING TO QINGDAO

From classic roast duck and noodles to German-style beer, this 420-mile (680 km) journey on modern expressways in northern China passes through three distinctive food cultures. It also spans the transition from urban sprawl to the gorgeous coastal landscapes of Qingdao.

s one of the globe's largest countries, China harbors myriad food cultures, many of them stretching back thousands of years. But the places with the best recipe for a culinary road trip are Beijing and nearby Shandong province, where you can sample the delicacies of three unique foodie destinations. Before departing Beijing, take in the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, and the Temple of Heaven. And be sure to sample such capital-city specialties as crispy Peking duck, Mongolian hot pot, jiaozi dumplings, and zha jiang noodles. Delve into the background of local food at the Imperial Cuisine Museum of China in the Haidian District. Once you clear traffic in the Beijing metro area, it's about a five-hour drive on the Changshen (G25) and Qingyin (G20) expressways to Weifang, Although it's off the usual tourist trail, Weifang is known to hobbysits around the globe as the "Capital of Kites" with an international kite-flying festival each April. But the local cuisine is also unique. Although it falls beneath the umbrella of Shandong cuisine, the city flaunts homegrown dishes like braised pork in brown sauce, huo shao sesame seed cakes stuffed with meat or shrimp, and hele ("harmony") buckwheat noodles served with beef, duck, or chicken.

It's another two hours down the G20 to Qingdao on the coast of the Yellow Sea. The ancient seaport is a bastion of Shandong or Lu cuisine, one of China's Eight Culinary Traditions. There is a special emphasis on seafood, of course; try steamed fish or clams, delicate dumplings stuffed with shrimp, squid, crab, and other maritime delights. Zhongshan Road, near the tip of the peninsula, and downtown Yunxiao Road are jam-packed with restaurants. And don't forget the Tsingtao, the beer that takes its name from the city. The guided tour of the historic brewery includes two beers and peanuts.

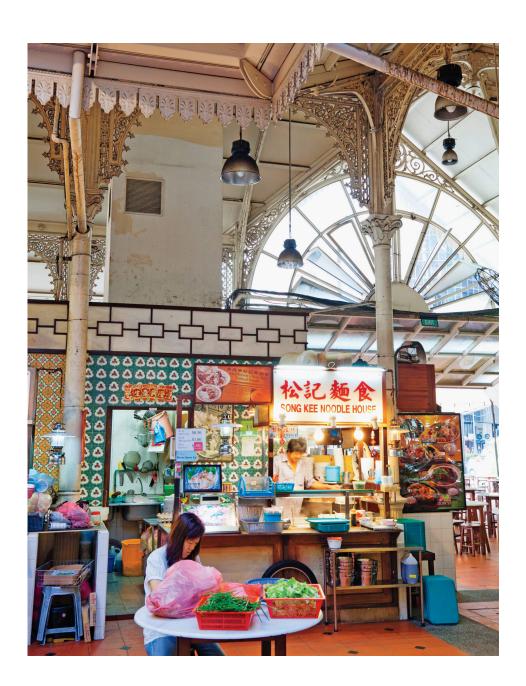
i HIDDEN HISTORY I a late starter to global domination, Germany's scramble for colonies in the late 19th century included Glingdae. From 1898 to 1914, the city served as the primary Pacific base for the German Imperial Navy. The kaiser's battleships are long gone, but the Germans left behind a wealth of Teutonic architecture like the Governor's Residence. St Michael's Cathedral. and Germania (Tsingtao) Brewery.



FROM: Beijing, China
TO: Qingdao, China
TO: Qingdao, China
ROADS: G25 and G20 expresswe
DISTANCE: 420 miles (680 km)
DRIVING TIME: 8 hours
WHEN TO GO: Spring of fall
PLANNING: Even though
the majority of the journey
is via modern toll roads, it's
recommended to hire a driver
with experience navigating in
China's crowded cities.
english/sitisbeijing.com.cn/
thatsqingdao.com/

The entrance to Pichai Yuan ("Firewood Courtyard") in character-rich Qingdao





| SINGAPORE |

A TASTE OF SINGAPORE

The confluence of three great Asian cultures, Singapore is the ideal place for a culinary road trip that features Chinese, Indian, and Malay foods in eateries ranging from coffee shops and hawker centers to fashionable waterfront eateries and sky-high restaurants.



A satay chef fans his barbecue grill in Lau Pa Sat "hawker" food market

lame it on the British. After founding modern Singapore on an island at the tip of the Malay Peninsula in 1819, they imported workers from elsewhere in the empire and divided the city into distinct ethnic districts: Chinese, Indian, and Malay. Like immigrants everywhere, those who moved to Singapore brought along their own foods, creating a culinary melting pot that's evolved into one of the world's great eating places.

With more than 2,700 sit-down restaurants and probably an equal number of hawker stalls, you could dine at a different place daily for nearly 15 years. But this culinary drive spans just two days, starting with a traditional Singapore breakfast of kaya toast with coconut jam and kopitium coffee at the wonderfully restored Lau Pa Sat Market (see Highlights). Walk off all those calories at the nearby Gardens by the Bay, a futuristic botanic garden with a dome-enclosed cloud forest and metallic "supertrees."

With your appetite revived, head for Little India and a culinary journey across the subcontinent that includes south Indian masala dosa and uthapam to north Indian tikka and tandoori dishes. After lunch, visit one of the district's Hindu temples or get your fortune told by one of the famous astrologer parrots before continuing to East Coast Park. Around sunset, grab an outdoor table at the East Coast Seafood Center, with ice-cold Tiger beer to wash down a plate of scrumptious chili crab (see Highlights).

Day two kicks off with something completely different: "Jungle Breakfast" with wildlife in the open-air Ah Meng restaurant of the world-famous Singapore Zoo. Heading back into the central city, stop at the MacRitchie Treetop Walk, an 820-foot (250 m) suspension bridge through the rainforest canopy of a nature preserve that sprawls across Singapore Island. Lunch today is in Tanjong Pagar, a historic district celebrated for its restored shop-houses and tasty Peranakan cuisine (see Highlights), a synthesis of Chinese and Malay ingredients and cooking methods experienced at the Blue Ginger restaurant. Hit the beach at Marina Bay Sands, where you can watch sunset from the rooftop bar.

OPPOSITE: Lau Pa Sat Market has a bewildering array of eateries, and a slightly old-fashioned appeal

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Fabricated in Scotland and shipped via the Suez Canal, Lau Pa Sat Market was receted in 1894 on what was then the Singapore waterfront. Restored in the 1990s, the Victorian filigree cast-iron structure (a national monument) now harbors dozens of traditional food stalls.

The famous chilli crab served at East Coast Seafood Center eateries like more and Long Beach comprises mud crab stir-fried in a thick, sweet, savory sauce made with tomatoes and chilles.

Developed in Singapore, Malacca, and Penang during British colonial days, Peranakan cuisine includes signature dishes like otak-otak (fish päté wrapped in a banana leaf), ayam buah keluak (chicken stew cooked with black nuts), and laksa spicy noodle soup, noodle soup.

FROM: Singapore
TO: Singapore
TO: Singapore
ROADS: PIE, ECP, CTE, and
various city streets
DISTANCE: 51 miles (81 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2-3 hours
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Time your drive to
coincide with annual events
such as the Singapore Food
Festival (July) or Singapore
Restaurant Week (NovemberDecember). visitsingapore.com



HUNTER VALLEY WINES

Drive through the Lower Hunter Valley, where vines flourish in the rich volcanic soil and the area is littered with wineries both big and small. Don't hesitate to make detours—there are 40 or more wineries to visit off the main route.

rive north on the Allandale Road from Cessnock to the Hunter Valley Wine Society, which represents 80 wine producers throughout the region and provides an introduction to wine $making\ and\ tasting.\ Behind\ the\ Society,\ Peterson\ House\ specializes\ in\ sparkling\ wines,\ which$ you can savor with oysters on the deck as you enjoy the view over a lake. Go west along Broke Road, turning left onto Halls Road for Pepper Tree Wines, a large winery and restaurant where an old nunnery set in lovely gardens is now The Convent Hunter Valley hotel. Continue west to Blaxland Inn, where $you \ can \ relax \ in \ front \ of \ a \ camp fire \ with \ a \ glass \ of \ local \ wine \ or \ dine \ under \ the \ stars \ on \ special ties \ such$ as lobster wasabi. When Broke Road reaches the intersection with McDonalds Road, follow the signs to McGuigan Wines and the Hunter Valley Cheese Company, which run joint tours. The strongly flavored $cheeses \ make \ a \ superb \ accompaniment \ to \ the \ local \ wines. \ Just \ next \ door \ is \ the \ Smelly \ Cheese \ Shop,$ $an \, eccentric \, delicates sen \, that \, stocks \, a \, huge \, range \, of \, foodie \, treats, \, including \, cheeses, \, meats, \, and \, olives \, a \, foodie \, treats, \, including \, cheeses, \, meats, \, and \, olives \, foodie \, treats, \, including \, cheeses, \, meats, \, and \, olives \, foodie \, treats, \, including \, cheeses, \, meats, \, and \, olives \, foodie \, treats, \, including \, cheeses, \, meats, \, and \, olives \, foodie \, treats, \, including \, cheeses, \, meats, \, and \, olives \, foodie \, treats, \, and \,$ from all over the world. Travel south on McDonalds Road to Tamburlaine Wines, where staff passionately promote their organic wine-making philosophy during excellent group tours and tastings. Overately promote their organic wine-making philosophy during excellent group tours and tastings. looking Ben Ean, a stalwart of the area established in 1843, is the best picnic spot in the Hunter Valley $atop\,a\,small\,hill.\,If\,you're\,lucky, live\,music\,may\,drift\,up\,from\,events\,at\,the\,winery\,below.\,Just\,off\,nearby$ making. To return to Cessnock, head east for 5 miles (8 km) on Marrowbone and Mount View Roads.

I STAY A WHILE I Whether you have sated your thirst for bold Australian wines or are looking for more to sample, a short drive north on the New England Hwy from Cessnock to the Upper Hunter Yalley is worth the effort. Another 27 wineries operate here, but many tourists are drawn by the magnificent scenery: the Hunter River has carved a labyrith of ridges and creds into the landscape. Climb rocky outcrops to see the river plunging down the valley and view remnants of Aboriginal culture.

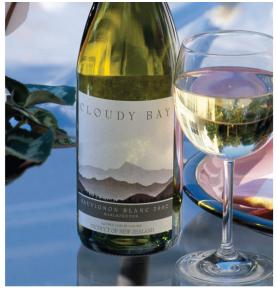


FROM: Loop route from Cessnock, Australia ROADS: Allandale Rd., Broke Rd., Halls Rd., McDonalds Rd., Marrowbone Rd., Mount View

DRIVING TIME: 30 minutes
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Not all roads off the
main route are paved.
winecountry.com.au

Kangaroos can sometimes be spotted amidst the Hunter Valley vines—it is best to keep your distance.





Cloudy Bay, more than any other winery in the area, made Marlborough's Sauvignon Blanc famous.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Each February, the **Marlborough Wine Festival** showcases the finest wines, matched with delicious locally sourced produce.

Southeast of Blenheim, Montana Brancott—a pioneer of the New Zealand wine industry—offers winery tours and has a restaurant and children's playground.

Enjoy the freshest seafood and many water sports amid the dramatic scenery of **Marlborough Sounds**, which is bordered by forests down to the water's edge.

I NEW ZEALAND I

MARLBOROUGH WINE TRAIL

Marlborough is New Zealand's premier wine-growing district, and the sun-drenched plain of the Wairau Valley produces more than 70 percent of the area's wine. Famous for its Sauvignon Blanc, the region also produces Riesling, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir.

t the northern tip of New Zealand's South Island, a short drive from the coast, the small town of Blenheim is the main base from which to explore this region, with dozens of wineries an easy drive away. Wander through the town, sampling the local cuisine offered in cafés and $restaurants\ around\ the\ center.\ From\ here,\ drive\ south\ toward\ Fairhall\ on\ New\ Renwick\ Road,\ stopping$ at Wither Hills, which has one of the valley's largest and most impressive cellars. A little farther west is the Brancott Estate, which offers tasting sessions and tours, as well as a restaurant, Cross Renwick Road to reach Renwick, a peaceful place to stay the night in the heart of this prolific wine district. Head $west through \, Renwick \, and \, then \, drive \, north \, on \, SH6 \, to \, meet \, Rapaura \, Road, \, known \, locally \, as \, the \, "Golden \, and \, then \, drive \, north \, on \, SH6 \, to \, meet \, Rapaura \, Road, \, known \, locally \, as \, the \, "Golden \, and \, then \, drive \, north \, on \, SH6 \, to \, meet \, Rapaura \, Road, \, known \, locally \, as \, the \, "Golden \, and \, then \, drive \, north \, on \, SH6 \, to \, meet \, Rapaura \, Road, \, known \, locally \, as \, the \, "Golden \, and \, then \, drive \, north \, on \, SH6 \, to \, meet \, Rapaura \, Road, \, known \, locally \, as \, the \, "Golden \, and \, then \, drive \, north \, on \, SH6 \, to \, meet \, Rapaura \, Road, \, known \, locally \, as \, the \, "Golden \, and \, then \, drive \, north \, on \, SH6 \, to \, meet \, Rapaura \, Road, \, known \, locally \, as \, the \, "Golden \, and \, then \, drive \, north \, nor$ Mile" because of the abundance of wineries and vineyards in the area, most of which are open to visitors. The family-run Wairau River Wines offers lunch at the cellar door, with specialties such as blue cod caught in the Marlborough Sounds (see Highlights). Alternatively, Georges Michel is to the south on Vintage Lane, with a restaurant nestled among the vines. To reach another popular dining spot in the valley, head north onto Jeffries Road to Hans Herzog's pretty cottage wine cellar, which serves Mediterranean-influenced food. Back on Rapaura Road, turn south on Jacksons Road. Passing Matua, one of New Zealand's biggest wineries, famous for its Shingle Peak brand, stop at the Cloudy Bay winery, where you can sample some of the finest wines of the area in the courtyard on a summer's day or by an open fire in winter. As you head back to Blenheim on Hammerichs Road, you have a choice of wineries to visit along the way.

FROM: Loop route from Blenheim, New Zealand RAOADS: New Renwick Rd., SHG, Rapaura Rd., Jeffries Rd., Jacksons Rd., Hammerichs Rd.
DISTANCE: 26 miles (42 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1 hour
WHEN TO GO: Year-round
PLANNING: Herzog's restaurant is renowned among foodles for its tasting menu. destinationmarilborough.com





SOUTH AFRICA

THE CAPE WINELANDS

 $The \ historic \ charms \ of \ Stellenbosch-South \ Africa's second \ oldest \ European-founded \ city$ $after\ Cape\ Town-make\ a\ perfect\ starting\ point\ for\ a\ tour\ of\ neatly\ staked\ vineyards\ set$ $among\ the\ green\ valleys\ and\ dramatic\ mountain\ ranges\ of\ the\ Western\ Cape.$



Fall colors tinge the vineyards of the Franschhoek Valley, with rocky peaks rising in the background

tellenbosch's oak-lined streets and picturesque setting on the Eerste River give it a storybook aspect, while students from the university add a youthful tempo. You don't have to travel far for your first wine tasting: The partly subterranean Bergkelder Wine Centre occupies a spectacular $position\ on\ the\ slopes\ of\ Papegaaiberg\ (Parrot\ Mountain)\ in\ the\ heart\ of\ the\ small\ city.\ From\ here,\ make$ $for the \ eastern \ outskirts, where \ Lanzerac \ (see \ Highlights) \ in \ the \ Jonkershoek \ Valley \ is \ among \ the \ Cape's$ oldest wine estates. Sample the famous Lanzerac Pinotage vintages and admire the manor house, one of the finest examples of early Cape Dutch architecture.

Leave Stellenbosch on the R310, which loops its way northeast through the glorious Helshoogte Pass, $with the \, 4,\!590\text{-}foot \, (1,\!399\,m) \, peak \, of \, Simons berg \, rising \, to \, the \, north. \, Beyond \, the \, pass, \, Boschendal \, Estate$ has been producing wines since 1685. Visit its wine-tasting center and gabled manor house, built by the de Villiers family in 1812. After Boschendal, turn right onto the R45, which follows the course of the $Franschhoek \ Valley. \ La\ Motte\ is\ another\ historic\ wine\ estate, with\ an\ 18th-century\ manor\ house, which\ manner \ before\ the property of the pr$ also cultivates flowers and produces essential (or ethereal) oils, obtained from plants such as lavender and rose geranium. Vinevards cover the valley sides around the pretty village of Franschhoek, where you can browse in arts, crafts, and antiques shops. The village's name means "French corner" in Afrikaans, and it was settled in the late 17th century by French Huguenots (Protestants), celebrated in the Huguenot Monument near the top end of the main street. Among the many wineries you can visit, the family-run Stony Brook vineyard is a great stop, 2.5 miles (4 km) beyond the Huguenot Monument.

Backtrack on the R45, then head north on the R301 to the town of Paarl, where the K.W.V. Wine Emporium offers a large selection of wines and brandies. Just west of Paarl, the Fairview Estate produces delicious goat's milk cheeses as well as wine. Returning on the R45/310 will take you down the northern end of the Franschhoek Valley and back over the Helshoogte Pass to Stellenbosch.

OPPOSITE: The spirit of the European pioneers survives in a Cape Dutch cottage in Stellenbosch

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Near Lanzerac in the Jonkershoek Valley, the **Assegaaibosch Nature Reserve** lies wedged between the Eerste River and Stellenbosch Mountain and is well worth a short Mountain and is well worth a short detour. Enjoy the wildflower garden and numerous walking trails. You are likely to see brightly colored agama lizards bobbing their heads as they sun themselves on warm rocks.

On your return journey, pause a while outside Groot Drakenstein outside Groot Drakenstein correctional facility near Simondium in the northern Franschhoek Valley. This was where former South African president Nelson Mandela made his "short walk to freedom" in February 1990 after 27 years of imprisonment by the apartheid regime

FROM: Loop route from Stellenbosch, South Africa ROADS: R310, R45, R301 DISTANCE: 100 miles (160 km) DRIVING TIME: 2 hours

WHEN TO GO: September

PLANNING: Keen walkers should go to the Stellenbosch Tourism Information Bureau for a map of vineyard hiking trails around the city. sa-venues.com





The outstanding Deidesheimer Hof restaurant was a favorite of Germany's ex-chancellor Helmut Kohl.

GERMANY

GERMAN WINE ROUTE

Running along the eastern edge of the vast Palatinate Forest beside the sandstone Haardt hills, this route visits a succession of wine villages and small towns where history and gastronomy dominate the culture, and vineyards are a constant backdrop.

monumental gateway, built in the 1930s, marks the southern starting point of the Weinstrasse (Wine Route) at Schweigen-Rechtenbach, on the border with Alsace. Head north, passing wine taverns along the roadside to Rhodt, an enchanting village where historic part-timber houses line the narrow streets. The easily navigable Weinstrasse, marked by yellow signs with bunches of black grapes, leads north past stretches of vineyards, mostly growing Riesling grapes. Kiwis, figs, and lemons also thrive here in the shade of wooded hills. As you approach Neustadt, you see the 11th-century Hambacher Schloss on the hillside. This stronghold, where 30,000 patriots demonstrated for German unity in 1832, is a symbol of German democracy. In March, the countryside north of Neustadt is ablaze with the pink and white blossom of thousands of almond trees (see In Focus). Deidesheim is home to some fine restaurants, many situated inside stately mansions. The small town of Bad Dürkheim has a pretty marketplace and several outstanding restaurants. It is also the venue for the Würstmarkt und Weinfest (see In Focus). Finally, you arrive in Bockenheim, where a church dedicated to Our Lady of the Grapes pays homage to the region's livelihood.

IN FOCUS From March to October, festivals take place along this route almost continually. The Almond Blossom Festival in the small town of Gimmeldingen starts the season as the surrounding countryside bursts into bloom. Bakeries sell flower-shaped cookies and fruity Riesling is available to sample. Bad Dürkheim is home to the Wüstmarkt und Weinfest each September-this wine festival claims to be the largest in the world and has been running in some form for 600 years.

FROM: Schweigen-Rechtenbach, Germany To: Bockenheim, Germany ROADS: Weinstrasse (Rtes. 38, 271) DISTANCE: 53 miles (85 km) DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours WHEN TO GO: Year-round PLANNING: Cometogermany.com



298 | DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

SCOTLAND |

SPEYSIDE WHISKY

Soft water from the burns, local peat, and highland barley are just some of the ingredients of Scotland's trademark single malt whiskies, each one subtly unique. This tour around the River Spey brings you to famed distilleries that ply their artful trade in surprising quietude.

iny Dufftown, set on the rivers Fiddich and Dullan and surrounded by heather-covered hills, has six working distilleries, whose productions include the world-famous Glenfiddich, winner of the most awards. As Scotland's foremost whisky town, Dufftown is an ideal place to enjoy $tutored\ nosings.\ Connoisseurs\ can\ also\ visit\ the\ whisky\ museum,\ with\ its\ small\ collection\ of\ historical$ $artifacts, as well as the celebrated \ Whisky \ Shop. \ After enough \ sniffs \ and \ sips, \ travel \ north \ along \ the$ A941 through ancient woodlands to Rothes, which has four working distilleries. Tour Glen Grant distillery, whose pale golden whisky is prized for its crisp, clean taste, and explore the magnificent $\label{thm:continuous} Victorian \ garden. \ The \ town \ is \ also \ well \ known \ for \ its \ fishing \ and \ is \ a \ popular \ base \ for \ hikes \ through \ the$ surrounding hills. Back on the A941 continue north to the elegant town of Elgin to shop at Gordon & $Macphail, a legendary special ist whisky shop, and to visit the cobbled medieval \, market place \, and \, ruined \, and \, ruined \,$ 13th-century cathedral. Glen Moray, one of seven distilleries in town, has a visitor center, tours, and tastings. Take the A96 west for around 10 miles (16 km) to the old town of Forres, famous for its gardens and floral sculptures, for Findhorn Bay, where you can spot seals and dolphins, and for Dallas Dhu, preserved as a historic working distillery. Here you can also enjoy a tour of Speyside's smallest distillery. Benromach. Head south on the A940 and A939, passing through Grantown-on-Spey, and take the A95 $east to \ rural \ Ball in dalloch. \ The \ magnificent \ castle \ is \ home \ to \ the \ MacPherson-Grant \ family, \ who \ also$ run the Glenfarclas distillery. The town's other distillery, Cragganmore, offers tours of its facilities, where makers still use traditional wooden worm-tubs for aging the whisky. Farther northeast lies Aberlour (officially Charlestown of Aberlour) in a beautiful setting, a must-visit for any whisky $connoisseur-you \ can \ even \ fill \ up \ your \ own \ bottle \ here. \ Return \ to \ Dufftown \ on \ the \ A941.$

IN FOCUS About 15 miles (24 km) northeast of Dufftown is the town of Keith, home to the Strathisla distillery, where the Chivas Regal blends are made. It has been in operation since 1786, which makes it the oldest working distillery in the Highlands—it is also the prettiest, with a cobbled courtyard and a drying kiln housed in twin pagoda-style buildings.

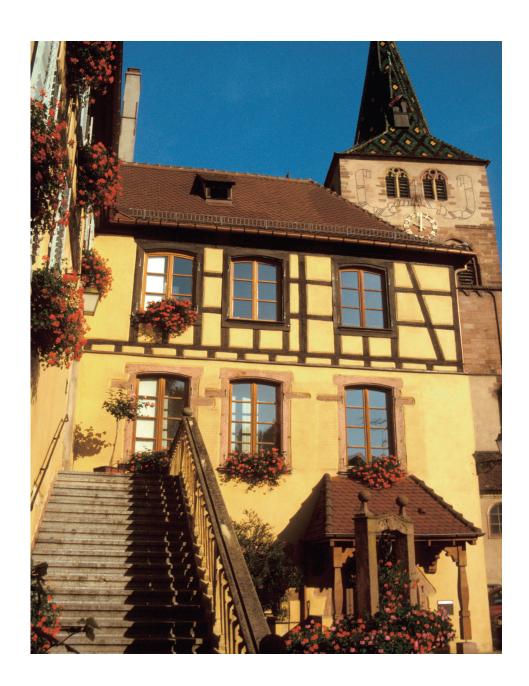


FROM: Loop route from Dufftown, Scotland ROADS: A941, A96, A940, A939, A95

DISTANCE: 90 miles (145 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours
WHEN TO 60: Spring through fall
PLANNING: Dufftown has
excellent restaurants and
Findhorn wonderful seafood,
while Aberlour offers
spectacular scenery and quality
places to stay.
maltwhiskytrail.com







| FRANCE |

THE ALSACE WINE ROUTE

The Alsace vineyards (home to 50 grands crus) stretch for more than 130 miles (200 km) across the foothills of the wooded Vosges Mountains. You could spend days here exploring the vineyards and eating like a king, but this section makes a fine day trip.



The vineyards surrounding Niedermorschwihr are threaded with walking trails.

he white wines of Alsace range from dry Rieslings to sweet dessert grands crus that are harvested late. Made from a single grape variety, they are identified by grape and maker's name. To pick up the wine route, take the D417 west from Colmar to Wintzenheim and turn north onto the minor road that crosses the River Fecht to Turckheim, with its three medieval gateways. From here, follow the Route du Vin signposts along mountain roads, climbing through vineyards to tiny, flower-decked Niedermorschwihr, where Grand Cru Sommerberg is produced. Follow the road in an east-west loop to Katzenthal, known for its Rieslings, and north to the village of Ammerschwihr, which has 50 wineries, including ones that use organic production and make the latest grand cru, Kaefferkopf. Follow the N415 north to Kaysersberg—birthplace of the missionary doctor Albert Schweitzer—set in the woods. Turn east through vineyards along the D28 and then left onto the D1B. A detout takes you to Riquewihr (see In Focus), then follow the D1B north to medieval Ribeauvillé, set on a south-facing slope dotted with castles and offering excellent restaurants and classic wines.

On the DIB, continue to Begheim, where a Wednesday market is held in the cobbled square, and then to St.-Hippolyte, whose medieval ramparts are overlooked by the spectacular towers of Château du Haut-Kenigsbourg (see Highlights). In 1899 the castle was given to the German kaiser, Wilhelm II, when Alsace was a German possession; it was returned to the French after World War I. From St.-Hippolyte, the D3S meanders north through a string of wine villages—Orschwiller, with a small wine museum; Riesling-producing Scherwiller (see Highlights); the old commune of Dambach-la-Ville; Ottrott, which makes red wine from its Pinot Noir grapes; and Rosheim, whose Maison Païenne (Pagan House), dating from 1170, may be the oldest domestic dwelling in Alsace.

IN FOCUS A detour off the DIB along the D3 leads to the walled town of Riquewihr, a 16th-century gem. Colorful timbered houses line its streets, and a stroll around the narrow, cobbled alleyways reveals a profusion of charming architectural detail. The aroma of winemaking fills the air, and you can taste the results in one of the many winstubs.

OPPOSITE: A stone house and bell tower in Turckheim typify Alsatian architecture.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

At St.-Hippolyte, visit the **Château** du Haut Keenigsbourg, which commands the most magnficent views across Alsace to the Rhine River. From 1900 to 1908, Kaiser Wilhelm II had it rebuilt from ruin in 15th-century style.

In Scherwiller, the **Sentier Gourmand** (Gourmet Path), a 4-mile (6 km) walk with stop-offs for food and tastings, takes place every September. Book early to participate in this gourmet experience with local producers.

FROM: Colmar, France
TO: Rosheim, France
ROADS: D417, N415, D28, D18, D35
(Route du Vin)
DISTANCE: 52 miles (85 km)
DRIVING TIME: 1,5 hours
WHEN TO GO: April through
October

PLANNING: Independent growers offer wine tastings and vineyard tours, and are signposted along the way. Wine fairs and festivals are held from April onward. vinsalsace.com



ULTIMATE ROAD TRIP

I ITALY I

THE LANGHE VALLEY

Robust Barolo and the world's finest truffles make Piedmont a gourmet's paradise. This drive runs through the fertile heart of the Langhe, a region of single-estate vineyards and pretty villages, including red-roofed Alba and Barolo.



Vine-covered hills bask in the sun, with the castle of Serralunga d'Alba visible on the horizon.

he noble red wines of the Langhe have the classification Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita (DOCG), a strict standard of quality like the French appellations, and are produced in artisanal, mostly family-run wineries. This itinerary through the areas central and western parts takes in many such estates, and you can branch off en route.

Leave Alba on Corso Enotria, heading south on the S29, After a few minutes, turn right on the winding road that climbs to Diano d'Alba, home to a decent Dolcetto red wine. The 16th-century church of San Giovanni Battista affords sweeping views over the hills. Farther west, at Grinzane Cavour, the beautiful Tith-century Castello Cavour houses a food and wine museum and the Enoteca Regionale Cavour, where you can taste and buy local wines, grappas, and foods, all rigorously selected.

Continue southwest via Gallo d'Alba to La Morra, which commands breezy views and preserves a charming medieval center more than 2,000 years ago, Julius Caesar recorded sampling the local wine here. You can follow suit at the Cantina Comunale,

I THE MAGIC OF TRUFFLES I Pledmont is home to the fabled white truffle—Tuber magnatum—one of the world's rarest and costliest foodstuffs. Truffles were enjoyed by the Babylonians, the Greeks, and the Romans, who consumed them as much for their reputed aphrodisiacal qualities as their gastronomic allure. These curious but delicate fungi grow underground among the roots of trees, particularly oak, hazel beech, and line. When ripe, usually in November, they exude a highly charged perfume redolent of undergrowth, and for a few brief days are sniffed out by specially trained dogs. This is the time to savor them in local restaurants and at the truffle fairs in Alba and other towns.

PEACEFUL ROADS
CRISSCROSS THE
LANGHE VALLEY'S
PASTORAL
COUNTRYSIDE,
WINDING THROUGH
A PATCHWORK
OF CELEBRATED
VINEYARDS AND
CLIMBING TO
MEDIEVAL HILLTOP
VILLAGES.

-TIM JEPSON
National Geographic writer

which represents 50 local producers. From La Morra, drive south to Barolo (see Highlights), which gives its name to the most famous of Pledmont's red wines, typically clear and light-colored, full-bodied and aromatic. In about 10 minutes you reach Monfort a CAIba, another center of Barolo production, including the outstanding wines of Gianfranco Alessandria, Aldo Conterno, and Domenico Clerico. Drive north 6 miles (10 km) over hills etched with vineyards via Castiglione Falletto, and then turn right before Gallo d'Alba to Serralunga d'Alba. The majestic Castello Falletti makes it one of the Langhe's most striking villages—and a good olace to stoo for vime and snacks.

Follow more pretty roads south via Roddino and Serravalle Langhe to Bossolasco, which has a locally renowned cake shop. Farther south, Murazzano is another lovely hillitop village, known for its eponymous cheese, which is available in local shops. From here, head to Vigilerchi and north along the ridgetop road.

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In Grinzane Cavour, the 13th-century castle houses a regional *enoteca* for tasting and buying wine

with magnificent valley views, via Mombarcaro and Niella Belbo as far as Cravanzana.

A short way beyond Cravanzana, turn right down to the Bormida Valley and Cortèmilia, a village dating back to pre-Roman times but now the light-industrial capital of the Langhe-it preserves some medieval pockets among modern buildings on both sides of the river. From here, you can head northwest back to Alba, taking the scenic S29 20 miles (31 km) through still more lovely countryside, climbing to Castino and dipping and winding between hills and valleys to Borgomale, with its 13th-century castle. Slightly farther on, at Manera, you can either head straight on, via Ricca to Alba, or detour northeast via Mango, where the Castello dei Marchesi di Busca is home to the Enoteca Regionale Colline del Moscato. Here you can buy sweeter Moscato and Asti wines, and dine in the Ristorante Castel di Mango.

Continue on to Barbaresco, which gives its mame to the second of the region's great re dwines. Visit the Enoteca Regionale and the premises of Angelo Gaja, one of Italy's most celebrated wine producers. The winding return to Alba lies alead. If time allows, you can make a 10-mile (16 km) trip from Alba west to Bra, the center of the Slow Food movement that promotes authentic tastes and dishes using produce grown by sustainable methods.

FROM: Loop route from Alba, Italy
ROADS: 529, local roads
DISTANCE: 88 miles (134 km); 95 miles
(152 km) via Mango and Barbaresco
DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours
WHEN TO Go: May through mid-October
PLANNING: Most of the region's roads are
unnumbered and follow north-to-southrunning valleys and ridges. There are
few lateral links crossing the hills west to
east. In fall, delicate mists give the hills an
ethereal beauty, piemonteitalia.eu/en

| HIGHLIGHTS |

In Barolo, at the Enoteca Regionale in the Castello Comunale Falletti di Barolo, you can sample and buy about a hundred different Barolos and other wines. There is also a visitor center, museum of viticulture, and the cantina of the Marchesi di Barolo, a historic wine estate.

From Vigilerchi, make a detour on the road that strikes east to Monesiglio, following it as far as the hamlet of San Biagio. The tiny Romanesque Santuario di Santa Maria dell'Acqua Dolce has rare early frescoes of Christ and the saints.



1 PAPRIKA, HUNGARY

Rte. 51 from Budapest sweeps south across the Puszta, Hungary's great plains, to the town of Kalocas. In September, orangered peppers from the surrounding fields are brought in to be ground, packed, and celebrated at the Kalocas Paprika Festival. Visit the Paprika Museum, packed with details of this capsicum's virtues. Learn that its flavor is enhanced by stirring it into hot oil before adding to a stew.

PLANNING: 1hungary.com/info/kalocsa

2 TRUFFLES IN UMBRIA, ITALY

Enjoy Umbria's hearty cuisine in late February, when Norcia's black truffles are in the spotlight. Turn off the SS3 at Spoleto and drive through Vallo di Nera and Cerreto di Spoleto to the Nero Norcia festival, held during two weekends. Tuck into wild boar stew, local Castelluccio lentils, and earthy black truffles while sipping the region's fine

PLANNING: Winter driving in Umbria's mountains may require snow chains, so be prepared. umbrianculture.com/truffle-hunting-in-umbria/

3 CHEESE, THE NETHERLANDS

Start in Gouda, the hub of traditional Dutch cheese. Near Gouda City Hall, visit the Waag, the 18th-century cheeseweighing house. Lunch in a restaurant may feature a kaasdoop—cheese fondue for dipping boiled potatoes or black bread. Try Gouda seasoned with cumin seeds, caraway, or nettles. Continue the cheese theme by driving north to Alkmaar, famous for its Friday market.

PLANNING: kaasmarkt.nl/en/

4 ATLANTIC OYSTERS, FRANCE

The D25 from Royan follows the Atlantic coast to Marennes, on the north side of the Seudre estuary. Tons of oysters are grown in beds spread across the estuary between here and La Tremblade. From Marennes, take the toll bridge to the file d'Oléron, then follow the Route des Huitres northwest from Château d'Oléron. In summer, sample a delicate Bouquet d'Oléron, pink and gray shrimp—with a glass of white wine.

PLANNING: huitres-courdavault-alain.com

10

FOOD DRIVES

From Hungarian paprika to earthy Italian truffles, food and fresh local produce are the inspiration for these glorious theme tours.

5 CORNISH SEAFOOD, ENGLAND

For a fish-lover's lunch, take the A389 to Padstow on the Camel River estuary, then follow the breathtaking north Cornish coast southwest. Get out for an invigorating walk along the beach at Watergate Bay. On the way back, stop in the village of Rock for Cornish specialties on the waterfront at The Mariners.

PLANNING: cornwall-calling.co.uk

6 HOKKAIDO SEAFOOD, JAPAN

in Japan's northernmost large island, markets are best for savoring its renowned seafood bounty. In the island capital, Sapporo, head for the larger wholesale markets to sample *kaisendon*, a bowl of rice topped with different raw seafoods. The port of Otaru has no fewer than nine markets. Get up early for its *asaichi* (morning) market, opening at 4 a.m. Hakodate has another famous *asaichi*. At Kushiro in the east, don't miss the Washo Market.

PLANNING: All markets have restaurants and other eateries, including some where you can take the produce you have bought in the market and have it prepared for you. envisit-hokkaido.jp

7 PELOPONNESE OLIVES, GREECE

Begin in historic Sparta's excellent Museum of the Olive and Greek Olive Oil. Thus informed, set out to explore the oliveclad plains and mountains. In Parapougki

OPPOSITE: In Alkmaar, a member of the Dutch cheese-carriers' guild wears its uniform of white shirt and trousers with a straw hat. in Kalamata, take a tour of Ben Olive Mill's groves and presses, followed by a tasting session. Olive Routes in Androusa also offer tours, while to the east you can experience Eumalia Organic Farm's organic produce.

PLANNING: Tours have to be booked in advance. visitgreece.gr/en/destinations/peloponnese

8 SAFFRON, TALIOUINE, MOROCCO

From mid-October through mid-November, the fields around Taliouine are a sea of purple—the purple blossoms of crocuses producing the world's most expensive spice, saffron. This is Morocco's biggest saffron-growing area, with the Berber village of Taliouine at its heart. Visit the Souktana Cooperative's small but fascinating Museum of Saffron Cultivation. Explore the old kasbah (fort) and enjoy a meal in one of the eateries on the main street.

PLANNING: In November, following the harvest, Taliouine holds a celebratory saffron festival with dancing and traditional hand drumming. visitagadir.com/en/taliouine

9 PAMPAS STEAK, ARGENTINA

Argentina was built on beef. Asados (barbecues) and parillas (steakhouses) are part of the fabric of life. Explore some of the nation's best meat eateries, Cabaña Las Lilas in Buenos Aires, Pasión por las Brasas in the city of Rosario, and Gapasai in the mountain resort of La Cumbre. Heading south, the wine-producing Uco Valley has chef Francis Mallmanis Siete Fuegos Asado. In the Andean foothills, Bariloche has El Boliche de Alberto, and in the far Patagonian south feast at La Zaina.

PLANNING: argentina.travel

10 DATES FROM THE OASES, OMAN

Dates are Oman's biggest crop, woven into daily life. Coffee is served with dates. Guests are greeted with them. Wherever you go, you pass plantations of handsome date palms. To find out more, drive out to the mountain village of Misfat al Abreyeen, surrounded by plantations. Take the hiking trail through the village, admiring the falaj irrigation system by which water is channeled through the different terraces.

PLANNING: Visit the wonderful emporium Al Hosni Omani Sweets, in Muscat.



The classic village shops found throughout the South of France are ideal places to buy local wine and products.

| FRANCE |

PROVENCE WINE ESTATES

Medieval villages, forests, vine-covered hillsides, and tastings of world-famous Provençal rosé await on this valley drive deep in the huge, noncontiguous wine region of Côtes de Provence AOC—Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée, a strict French wine classification.

egin in Les Arcs sur Argens, with its medieval core and Villeneuve castle, and take the DN7 southwest past the Maison des Vins—an excellent introduction to Côtes de Provence wines. After Vidauban, turn onto the D84 toward Le Thoronet and wind through woodsy hills interspersed with vines and hamlets for about 20 minutes. The D17 and D79 bring you to the Cistercian abbey of Notre-Dame-du-Thoronet, built of vivid rose stone in Romanesque style. Follow the tiny D279 then the D13 to picturesque Carcès, perhaps stopping for a tasting at one of the domaines along the way. Medical Cotignac lies 5 miles (8 km) away on the D13, tucked up against a hillside. Above, tufa cliffs hold caves once hollowed out for wine cellars and even dwellings. The D50 leads on to Entrecasteaux, another picturesque medieval town. Vineyards alternate with pine-clad hills along the D31 until you reach Salernes, famous since the 18th century for its tometters—red, hexagonal floor tiles. Follow the D51 for 3 miles (5 km) to Villecroze, whose ancient pastel-shuttered houses brim with flowers. It is set against tufa cliffs full of troglodyte caves, which you can visit. Take the D557 back onto the D51 for a twisty climb up to Tourtour, from where the views are stupendous. Descend via the D77, D557, and D10 through ecru cliffs and pine trees. Passing the Orthodox monastery of St.-Michel du Var (1985), open to visitors, you reach the lovely medieval town of Lorgues, replete with châteaus and chances to sample more wine. Return to Les Arcs via the D10 and D57.

IN FOCUS I From Les Arcs, follow the D91 for 4.5 miles (7 km) to Chiteau Sainte Roseline, an ancient abbey converted into a castle, with a vineyard setting where you can taste a cru classé produced since the 14th century. Sr. Roseline was the pious daughter of the Marquis de Villeneuve, and mother superior of the abbey 1300-29.

FROM: Loop route from Les Arcs sur Argens, France ROADS: DN7, D84, D17, D79, D279, D13, D50, D31, D51, D557, D77, D10, D57

DISTANCE: 60 miles (90 km)
DRIVING TIME: 2.5 hours

WHEN TO GO: June through September PLANNING: The Maison des Vins in Les Arcs has free wine tastings daily and an excellent restaurant. provencebeyond.com



306 I DRIVES OF A LIFETIME

MONTI IBLEI

A trip around this wild, rugged limestone plateau in southeast Sicily mixes the culinary delights of specialty olive oil, honey, and local dishes with the aesthetics of lovely baroque buildings and major archaeological sites.

et off from Syracuse (Siracusa), once a powerful Greek city, and head west on the local road toward Belvedere. Pass under the autostrada and turn right, then left after 3 miles (5 km) to the Anapo River. At Ponte Diddino, turn right on the high $scenic \, road \, to \, Sortino, which \, stages \, a \, honey \, festival \, in \, October — the \, Greeks \, thought \, the \, herbs \, and \, constant \,$ and flowers of Monti Iblei produced the nectar of the gods. Another delicious specialty here is pizzolo, a garnished pizza that is split and stuffed with cheese, meat, or vegetables—there are even sweet versions for dessert. From Sortino, head west toward Buccheri on a minor road that dips and $climbs\ past\ Monte\ Santa\ Venere.\ After\ 10\ miles\ (16\ km), turn\ left\ to\ Ferla,\ where\ another\ left\ turn\ takes$ you 5.5 miles (9 km) above the Anapo Valley to spectacular Pantalica, where the rock is honeycombed with more than 5,000 prehistoric tombs. Retrace your steps and head west for the mountain hamlet of Buccheri. From here, the SS124 ridgetop road runs northwest to Vizzini, famous as the birthplace of $the author Giovanni \, Verga \, and \, the \, hub \, of \, ricotta \, cheese-making. \, Drive \, south \, to \, Giarratana \, (see \, Excurrence and \, Control of the c$ sion), where gigantic sweet onions, weighing up to 5 lb (2 kg) apiece, are grown and celebrated in a summer festival where you can savor onion focaccia and cheese with onion iam. Head east toward Palazzolo Acreide, which has baroque buildings and a good museum of rural life, but is better known for the ruins at Akrai, Greek Syracuse's first inland colony in the seventh century B.C. The village's gastronomic treats include local porcini and ovoli mushrooms, sausage, ravioli with pistachio, and carob-flavored custard. Another 50 minutes along the SS124 brings you back to Syracuse, where you can enjoy a well-earned dish of pasta fritta alla siracusana (spaghetti dusted with breadcrumbs and $fried\ with\ anchovy\ until\ crispy),\ grilled\ tuna,\ or\ octopus\ salad\ washed\ down\ with\ a\ dry\ red\ Nero\ di\ Avola.$

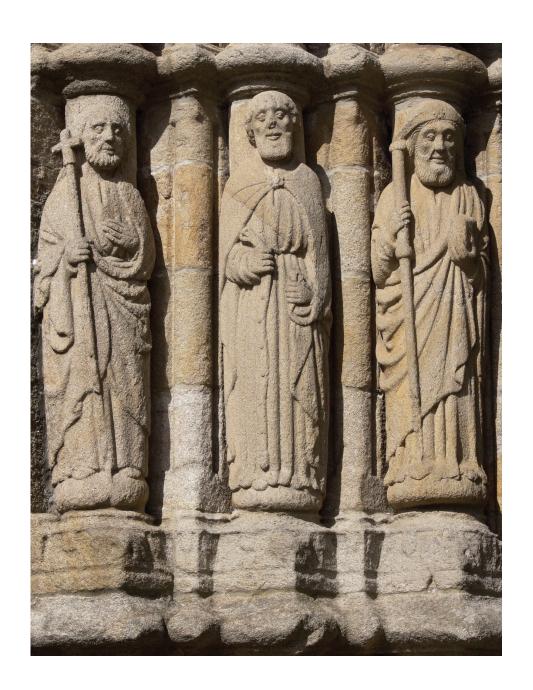
EXCURSION Chiaramonte Gulff, a center of production for the famed olive oil of Monti Iblei, lies about a 25-minute drive due southwest of Giarratana on the SS194. At the family estate of Frantoi Cutrera, only the early green harvest of the Tonda Iblea olives is used with the cold extraction method, producing a spicy and sweet oil.

FROM: Loop route from Syracuse, Italy ROADS: Local roads, SS124 DISTANCE: 95 miles (153 km) DRIVING TIME: 3.5 hours WHEN TO GO: April through October

PLANNING: In spring, the area is covered in wildflowers, summer is very hot, and fall brings harvests and gentler temperatures. bestofsicily.com

The Sicilian city of Syracuse is a fascinating destination for both its millennia-long history and its many culinary delights





| SPAIN |

SEAFOOD AND WINE IN GALICIA

A tour through the seafood paradise of Galicia, in Spain's northwest corner, winds alongside the fjord-like Rías Baixas, revealing superb land- and seascapes, rustic architecture, and taverns where maritime morsels are served with local Albariño white wine.



 $A carved stone \ cross \ in \ Pontevedra \ is \ typical \ of \ \textit{cruceiros} \ found \ in \ town \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ all \ across \ Galicia \ and \ village \ squares \ and \ squares \ and \ village \ squares \ another \ squares \ and \ village \ squares \ squares \ squares \ a$

hat could be more evocative than to start a drive at Fisterra (Finisterre, "land's end"), once the end of the known world? Today, the town of Fisterra has handsome stone houses and the imposing Romanesque church of Santa María das Areas. Drive 2 miles (3 km) south and you reach Cabo Fisterra (Cape Finisterre), whose lighthouse presides over the dramatic Costa da Morte (Coast of Death), famous for shipwrecks. Head back into Fisterra for some nourishment, then drive east to the town of Corcubión and southeast on the A.C.-445/550 to Muros, standing on the shore of the ria (tidal river inlet) named after the town: Ría de Muros y Noia. Known for its granite houses with cozy glassed-in galleries overlooking the fishing port, Muros is a good place to find a tavern serving pulpo a feira (octopus on potato slices), a Galician favorite, washed down with Albariño wine. $Carry \, on \, around \, the \, ria \, to \, Noia \, for \, a \, stop \, to \, wander \, through \, its \, medieval \, town \, center. \, Continuing \, south$ $along the A.C.-550\,coast\,road\,brings\,you\,to\,Ribeira\,on\,the\,R\'ia\,de\,Arousa, after\,which\,you\,head\,northeast$ on the A.G.-11 to the ancient town of Padrón, famous for its pimientos de Padrón, small green chili peppers. Take the P.O.-548/549 coastal route to Cambados, whose stylish parador (state-run hotel) is a perfect place for a drink or meal or to spend the night. Also worth investigating are Cambados's elegantPlaza de Fefiñanes and the Michelin-starred Yayo Daporta restaurant. From Cambados, a coastal route continues to O Grove, south to Sanxenxo, then east along the R'ia de Pontevedra to San Salvador de Poio, and the Contract ofwhere Pepe Solla serves pristine seafood and baby vegetables at his family restaurant. Across the ria, Pontevedra, with its parador, its medieval old quarter, and its Santa María la Mayor church, welcomes you with open arms—and restaurants.

I UNEXPECTED PLEASURE I Vigo, southeast of Pontevedra, is the gateway to one of Spain's bestpreserved natural parks—the Cies Islands, 21 miles (35 km) out in the Atlantic. The archipelago consists of three main islands—thorteagude, Montelaro, and San Anattin. Ferries connect them with Vigo eight times daily. For hiking, beaches, and bird- and butterfly-watching, the Cies are an ideal day trip, or you can stay overnight in the campground.

OPPOSITE: Statues of the Apostles adorn the 15th-century church of San Martino in Noia.

| HIGHLIGHTS |

Miradors, or lookout points, abound along this coastline. The **Mirador de la Curota**, in the Sierra de Barbanza, north of Ribeira, is famous for its sweeping vistas of the Ría de Arousa.

Cambados, at the heart of the **Val de**O **Sainés** wine-growing region, is the
best base for visiting wineries
(bodegas) making fresh and fruity
white wines from the Albariño grape.
Among the best known is **Bodegas**Martin Códax in the nearby village of
Villariño. Named for a 13th-century
Galician poet and troubadour, the
winery prints extracts from his music
and verse on its corks.

FROM: Fisterra, Spain
TO: Pontevedra, Spain
ROADS: A.C.-445, A.C.-550, A.G.-11, P.O.-548, P.O.-549
DISTANCE: 162 miles (260 km)
DRIVING TIME: 6 hours

WHEN TO GO: May-June and September-October offer good weather and not too many tourists.

PLANNING: If you want to visit wineries, call in advance. The local tourist offices can help with this. turismoriasbaixas.com/en/





Rabelos are the traditional boats that were once used to carry port downriver for export.

PORTUGAL

DOURO VALLEY

 $A\ drive\ along\ the\ Douro\ Valley\ in\ northern\ Portugal\ offers\ glorious\ views\ of\ terraced$ Native using the Doub's valley in home in Fortigan gives go notice view, of terraceal vineyards and olive groves perched on the steep valley sides. This is the wild and beautiful home of port, where you can sample the fortified wine on remote quintas (wine estates).

llow yourself time to linger in the town of Peso da Régua, situated on a bend in the Douro River, with a maze of narrow streets and small shops, cafés, and restaurants. Why not prepare yourself for the drive ahead with a visit to Régua's Museu do Douro, dedicated to the wines, history, and culture of the Douro Valley? Sample the wines at the Solar do Vinho do Porto, run by the Port and Douro Wines Institute on Rua da Ferreirinha. Thus fortified, head east on the $N222, which \, runs \, along \, the \, south \, bank \, of \, the \, Douro, giving \, great \, views \, of \, the \, valley's \, sunlit \, northern \, along \, the \, south \, bank \, of \, the \, Douro, \, giving \, great \, views \, of \, the \, valley's \, sunlit \, northern \, along \, the \, south \, bank \, of \, the \, Douro, \, giving \, great \, views \, of \, the \, valley's \, sunlit \, northern \, along \, the$ side. The farther east you travel, the more beautiful the valley appears as the hills fall steeply to the river and the landscape becomes ever more sparsely populated and wild. Keep an eye open for quintas to visit, such as the Quinta do Panascal, which offers fascinating vineyard tours. After 17 miles (27 km), the town of Pinhão stands where the Pinhão River joins the Douro, a perfect place for lunch. Backtrack south to the point where the N222 turns eastward, diverging from the Douro and taking you on a spectacular mountain route toward the town of Vila Nova de Foz Côa. In the hamlet of Touça, take a detour north to Freixo de Numão, where you can relish award-winning olive oil made by a local $\,$ cooperative, not to mention its wines and grape spirit. The village also has a baroque palace and remarkable Roman remains, including the stones of a Roman road where you can see the ruts made by carts. Back on the N222, you soon reach Vila Nova de Foz Côa, built high above the Côa River, another tributary of the Douro, amid

FROM: Peso da Régua, Portugal To: Vila Nova de Foz Côa, Portugal

ROADS: N222, local roads

DISTANCE: 58 miles (94 km)

DRIVING TIME: 2 hours
WHEN TO GO: Visit in spring for WHEN TO GO: Visit in spring for the almond blossom, late summer for the wine harvest, and fall for leaf color. PLANNING: You can extend your tour after Vila Nova de Foz Côa

tour after VIIa Nova de Foz Coa by pressing on eastward with a two- or three-day trip into the rugged Tras-os-Montes region. visitportugal.com/en/content/ douro-valley



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olive and almond groves.

ALSO RECOMMENDED

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY "TASTE TRAIL," ONTARIO

Pick from a list of 31 wineries, restaurants, breweries, creameries, and bistros scattered around the roughly 12-mile (19 km) Taste Trail-County Road 33, linking Wellington, Bloomfield, and Picton. Try the "best bread in the county" at Bloomfield Carriage House. Also in Bloomfield, Slickers County Ice Cream serves vanilla mixed with apple pie, and down the road in Picton is Buddha Dog for "Canada's Best Hotdog." tastetrail.ca

MAPLE SYRUP, VERMONT

To taste the terroir varieties of maple syrup, visit sugarhouses along 110 miles (177 km) of Vermont's Rtes. 7 and 100, starting near Burlington and winding through Woodstock and Ladlow. Dakin Farm, Sugarbush Farm, and Green Mountain Sugar House also offer maple fudge, cream, and candy; and at Dakin there is a weekend pancake breakfast.

vermontmaple.org

· CAPE COD CLAMS.

Begin this 160-mile (256 km) circuit at Cape Cod Canal, stopping in Sandwich for Sam's crunchy battered clams. Farther north at Provincetown, visit "The Pot"-the Lobster Pot restaurant famous for its historic harbor view. Then drive to Chatham for the ultimate cape pub, Chatham Squire, and its ultimate clam chowder.

BEER TRAIL, OREGON

Portland has more microbreweries than any other U.S. city. Visit Widmer Brothers Gasthaus and Racoon Lodge & Brewpub, then head off to the coast for McMenamins Lighthouse Brewpub. A stunning drive south on Hwy. 101 leads to the 50 beers on tap at Rogue Brewery in Newport.

traveloregon.com

• TACO TRAIL, TEXAS

In sprawling San Antonio, begin at about 9 a.m. on East Hildebrand with Taco Taco's giant tortillas overflowing with cheese, chorizo, egg, potato, or refried beans. Stop on San Pedro for a lunch of Teka Molena's

deep-fried "puffy" tacos, Arturo's Barbacoa has unusual meat versions, while for purists, the best fish tacos are at Rosario's in King William.

TEA PLANTATIONS, INDIA

From Kochi, the NH 49 travels 68 miles (110 km) into the cool green hills of Munnar, covered in tea plantations. The air is filled with the aroma of tea and spices: pepper, cinnamon, cloves, and cardamom all grow locally. Investigate Munnar's tea museum, then climb 15 miles (25 km) by 4WD up to Kolukkamulai Estate, at 7,873 feet (2,400 m) India's highest plantation.

BALSAMIC VINEGAR TOUR, ITALY

In Modena, aceto balsamico (balsamic vinegar) is made from local grapes and aged in wooden barrels. Taste at an acetaia (vinegar-maker) and then take the A1 to nearby Parma to savor local cured meats and pasta topped by nonpareil Parmigiano-Reggiano-Parmesan cheese.

lebaccanti.com

• IBERIAN HAM ROUTE, SPAIN

Montánchez in the Extremadura is a center for superlative jamón ibérico. Iberian ham. sold in tiny bodegas and bars. Hence you can have a glass of local pitarra wine with your ham sampling. Continue tasting in Monesterio to the south, moving westward for Calera de León and Cabeza la Vaca. spain.info

• CAKE TREATS. PORTUGAL

The most famous place to taste the pastel de nata, a small but perfect custard tart, is Antiga Confeitaria de Belém, just 15 minutes from downtown Lisbon, right outside the Monastery of Jerónimos. Here almost 10,000 pastries are sold every day, fresh from the oven. Back in Lisbon, visit the sumptuous 1920s Pastelaria Versailles.

BLACK FOREST ROUTE, GERMANY

Loop into the Black Forest region from Villingen-Schwennigen along local roads to Waldkirch and Titisee. Between swathes of meadow and dark green forest, you can

sample local specialties-fruit schnapps, rye bread baked over wood, Black Forest ham, and genuine Black Forest gâteau. germany-tourism.de

GOURMET TRAILS, ENGLAND

Gourmet Yorkshire offers four self-drive trails focused on local beef, game, cheese, and markets, starting and ending in York. Visit a water buffalo farm in Brompton, eat a "Celebrated" pork pie in Skipton, and have a comforting lavender and brown bread ice cream at Ryelands of Helmsley. urmetyorkshire.co.uk

LAKSA IN PENANG ISLAND. MALAYSIA

Penang Island is famous as Malaysia's food capital, and assam laksa, a spicy sour fish and noodle soup, is its emblematic dish, best experienced at a street stall. Begin with one of the most famous stalls, Penang Road Famous Laksa in George Town's Keng Kwee Street. For further installments of laksa pleasure, head to the suburb of Ayer Itam and its famous Laksa Bisu stall.

penang.ws/penang-attractions/

MARCHÉS AU GRAS IN GERS,

FRANCE

Southwestern France's Gers department is the "land of fat," by which locals mean duck and goose products, such as $confit\ de$ canard (preserved duck). In fall, marchés au gras ("fat markets") start up in Eauze, Seissan, Fleurance, Gimont, and Samatan, each on a different day of the week, lasting until spring. At other times, don't miss Auch's covered market.

CORK CHEESES, IRELAND

Gubbeen, Milleens, Durrus, Ardagh Castle, Ardrahan—just some of County Cork's award-winning artisan cheeses. To sample the range, begin with one of the county's sumptuous delis, such as On the Pig's Back in Cork City's English Market or Manning's Emporium, near Bantry, If that has whetted your appetite, enjoy a tour through some of the weekly farmers' markets, such as the markets at Mahon Point in Cork City, Skibbereen, and Schull.

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Authors Rita Ariyoshi Ian Armitage Kathy Arnold Kathy Arnold Katherine Ashenburg Jackie Attwood-Dupont Rosemary Bailey Christopher P. Baker Sandra Bardwell Michael Bright Steven Brook

Michael Lewis

John F. Ross

Kay Scheller

William G. Scheller

Joe Yogerst

Steven Brook Christopher Catling Marolyn Charpentier Peter Clubb Roberta Cosi Greg Critser Antonia Cunningham Bob Devine Bob Devine Carole Douglis Jerry Carmarillo Dunn, Jr. Keith Elliott Gary Ferguson Mike Gerrard Nick Hanna Michael Ivory Tim Jepson Ann Jones Caroline Juler Alison Kahn Andrew Kerr-Jarrett

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